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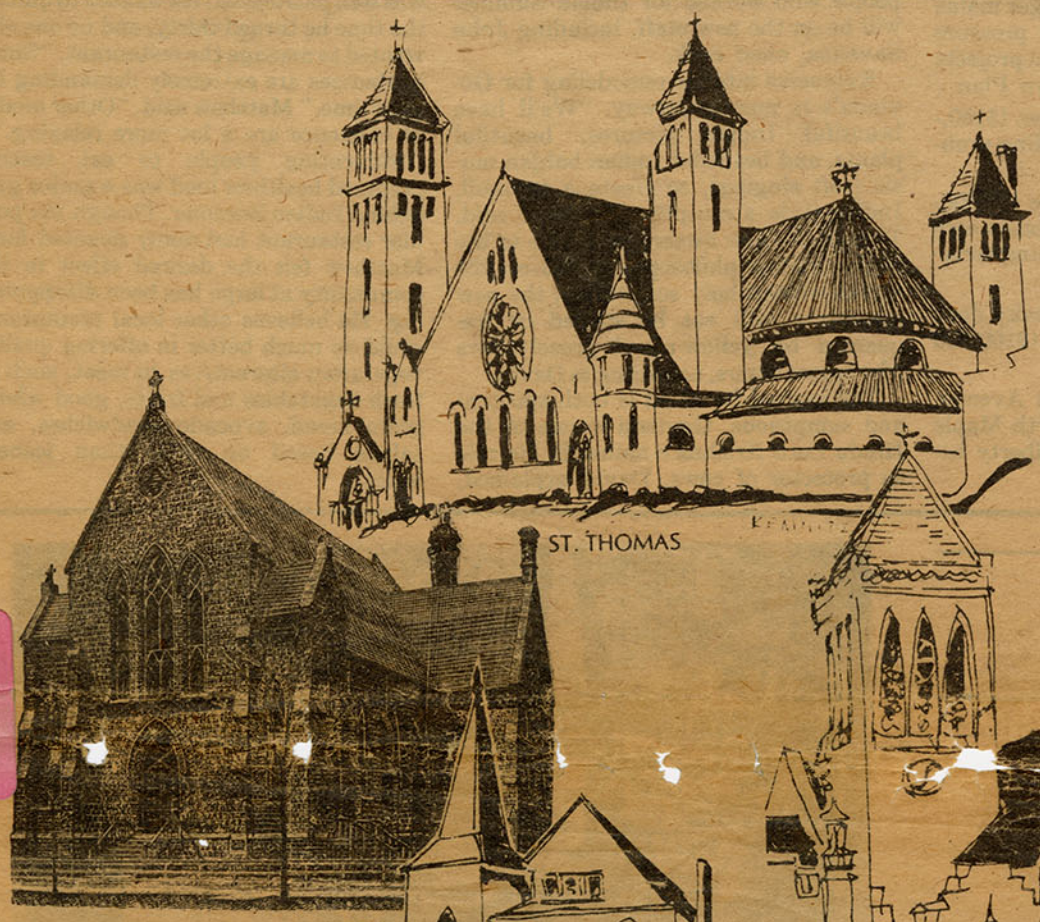
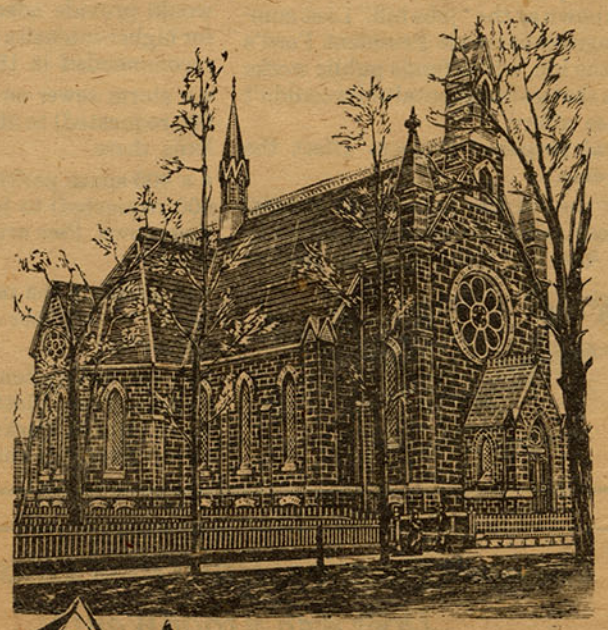
Ann Arbor Observer

ANN ARBOR, MICHIGAN SERVING CENTRAL ANN ARBOR NOVEMBER, 1976



FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

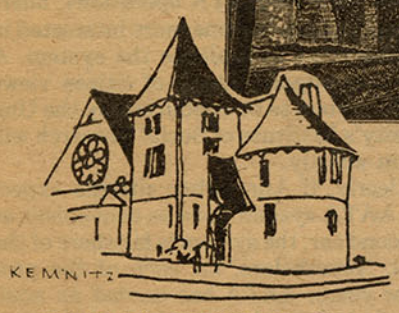
GRACE APOSTOLIC CHURCH



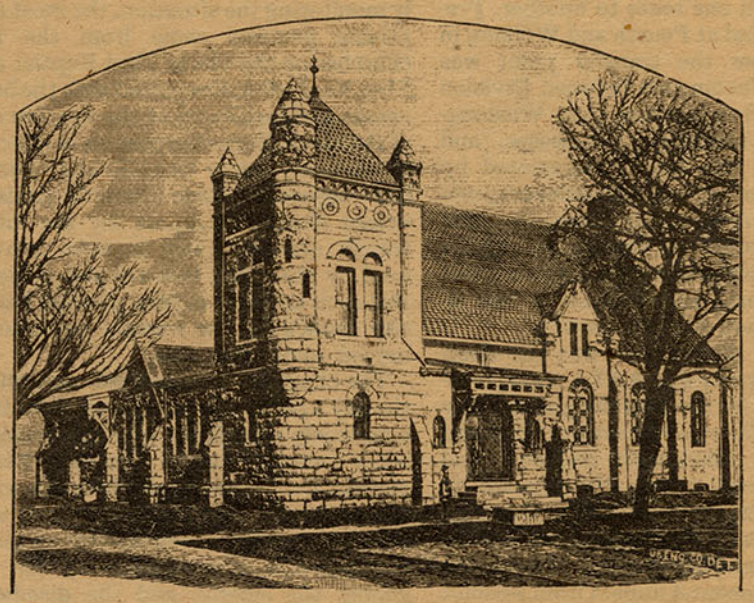
FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH

BETHLEHEM UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

ST. ANDREW'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

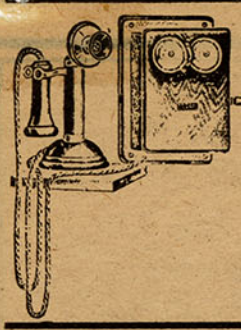


MEMORIAL CHRISTIAN CHURCH



THE BIBLE CHURCH

The contemporary (less detailed) drawings are from Milt Kemnitz's composite drawing of Ann Arbor churches. The old electrotype engravings were taken from an 1887 booklet published by the Ann Arbor Business Men's Association, called The City of Ann Arbor: Its Resources and Advantages. See the special inside section on downtown churches built before 1900. All of these churches will be open Sunday afternoon, November 7 for the Bicentennial Commission's Tour of Historic Churches.



Update

Federal Aid Is Asked For Public Works: Parking, Water Mains, Fire Station Downtown

The city of Ann Arbor has just applied for $10,000,000 worth of federally-funded public works projects under the Public Works Employment Act of 1976, commonly known as the "jobs bill." Last summer Congress overrode President Ford's veto of the bill, which funds public works projects that governmental units couldn't otherwise afford.

Several proposed projects affect the central area:

- a new central fire station ($1,900,000 requested), to be erected on city property at Fifth Ave. and Ann behind the present fire station. The new building would have space for turning radii of modern equipment, with five engine bays and room for mechanical repairs. The old firehouse, a designated National Register landmark, would be used for some other purpose. A city hall annex and a restaurant have both been mentioned.
- water main improvements on East Liberty and elsewhere ($900,000 requested). 3300 linear feet of larger mains would provide adequate water pressure for higher-intensity development projects recommended in the Downtown Plan.
- a storm sewer on Depot Street ($150,000 requested) to alleviate flooding problems there.
- a 400-space parking structure ($2,000,000 requested) to be erected somewhere downtown. (See article on parking structures.)
- resurfacing the perennially leaky deck on the second floor of City Hall ($100,000 requested).
- street restoration on Geddes Avenue, Pontiac Trail, Platt Road, North Maple Road, Huron Parkway, and Liberty between Stadium and Seventh.

Community Planning and Management, a research division of the City Administrator's office, applied to the U.S. Department of Commerce's Economic Development Administration for the grant. In late December the city will find out if the projects have been approved. If approved, construction is required to be underway by March 31. •

Indian Summer Becomes Govinda's With a Hindu Approach To Vegetarian Dining

Indian Summer, Ann Arbor's first natural foods restaurant, has been sold to five new owners who will reopen it soon. as Govinda's Natural Foods. Co-owners William and David Bowman (father and son) will manage it. Many of the same people who worked for Indian Summer will be on the new staff, including John Savanna, chief cook.

Extensive interior remodeling for Govinda's is now underway. "We'll have beautiful Indian pictures, beautiful plants, and beautiful Indian bahjan music (soft singing), to create a tranquil, Indian-style atmosphere," David said. Though the new owners subscribe to the Hare Krishna philosophy based on the Vedas (Hindu holy scriptures), the new restaurant will not be staffed or frequented by yellow-robed proselytizers who accost diners, according to David.

The aspired-for mood is both spiritual and sumptuous. Govinda is one of the Hindu Lord Krishna's names in his role as protector of cows. David explained, "we offer the food back to the creator, to God, before we eat."

The menu will include Indian vegetarian dishes and drinks such as lassi (a yogurt drink) and haiku nectar (made from Hawaiian rainwater, honey, and fruit). Haiku nectar will be served free on opening day.

Matthew Posner, manager of Indian Summer for the past two years, was one of seven University of Michigan graduates who started Indian Summer in 1971, using capital they had saved or borrowed from parents. "None of us perceived ourselves as professional restauranteurs," Matthew said. "We were vegetarians, and about half were actively pursuing Eastern religions. We thought it would be neat and groovy starting a natural foods restaurant in Ann Arbor."

The decision to sell was not economically based, Matthew said. The restaurant was well patronized. He wanted to quit by the time he turned thirty, and no one else wanted to manage the restaurant. "Small businesses are extremely demanding for your time," Matthew said. "Other modes of existence are a lot more relaxing."

Educating people to eat tastily-prepared healthier food was a major goal behind Indian Summer. Though the popular restaurant had many devoted fans, Matthew felt the desired effect in the community at large has been disappointing. He believes other local restaurants could do much better in offering quality vegetarian alternatives to meat, such as fresh vegetables and fruits, good whole-grain bread, avocado sandwiches, and salads based on more than iceberg lettuce. •

The Basic Question: How Good a Bus System Does Ann Arbor Want?

The Bus Transfer Point Controversy Reflects Divided Views about AATA

Part of the area along E. Washington where AATA moved the bus transfer point. Protests from neighboring businesses, residents, and churches forced its removal.

October's volatile controversy over relocating the city's major bus transfer point has indirectly raised the question of how much community support there is for a strong public transit system.

The transfer point is a one-half-block length of roadway needed downtown as a place where buses and vans on all routes can converge to allow passengers to transfer from one route to another. Previously located at Fourth and William, in early October the transfer point was moved to Washington between Division and State. But pressure from Washington Street residents, businesses, and churches in this block, augmented by pressure from city council members, convinced the Ann Arbor Transportation Authority board to reverse an AATA staff decision and move the transfer point back to Fourth and William, a less efficient location for bus routing.

Although Washington was the clear-cut choice by city and AATA transportation experts for the transfer point, every block along the stretch between State and Ashley was filled with residents and business people adamantly opposed to having the transfer point near them. Of all the blocks on Washington, the one between State and Division would suffer the least environmental impact from periodic congestion of buses and vans. But when the AATA information booths and bus signs were installed there, protests were immediatly lodged. An apartment owner began an incessant barrage on city council and AATA board members, demanding that the transfer point be moved elsewhere. A pharmacist protested the loss of his two short-term meters to parking spaces for buses. Apartment dwellers complained of loiterers around their dwellings and of bus fumes. The occupants in a medical building said that bus riders were beginning to use their building as a waiting area.

But to the AATA staff, who were closely monitoring the situation, the most surprising protests came from the two churches on the block, First Baptist and First Methodist. Compared with the businesses and residences at the western end of the block, both churches were affected in relatively minor ways by the periodic bus congestion. Each church's minister voiced abstract support for the city's transit system, which is most heavily used by the city's less affluent citizens. But each minister in turn pleaded before city council for the transfer point to be moved somewhere else.

The churches' inconsistent support of the city's public transit system reflects in a curiously significant way the inconsistency demonstrated by Ann Arborites in general. On the one hand, there is a widespread feeling that a strong transit system, which reduces dependence on autos and provides greater mobility for the young, the elderly, and the disadvantaged, is a good thing, something congruent with Ann Arbor's progressive image. Voters demonstrated this in 1973 when they imposed a whopping 2½ mill property tax on themselves just to pay for their transit system. This is one of the highest per capita levels of tax support for a bus system in the country.

On the other hand, Ann Arbor citizens show surprisingly little day-to-day pro-transit sentiment. A substantial proportion—perhaps as much as half—have never taken an AATA bus or van. And of those who have taken them, one is more likely to hear complaints than accolades about the service.

Such complaints are to some extent expected when a transit system grows as rapidly as had AATA: from five buses in operation in 1969 to nearly a hundred buses and vans in operation today. AATA is still working the bugs out of its newly implemented system, and the staff expects considerable service improvements in the next one to two years.

Complaints are probably accentuated because the citizenry—both affluent and not—adapts its travel-time expectancies to the individually-owned auto. At no time in the foreseeable future is it likely that the city's transit system will rival the private car for convenience, the Dial-a-Ride system notwithstanding.

The AATA board itself is beginning to take a more critical view of the city's transit system, a change caused partly by recent appointments to the board. Board members are questioning the long and short term goals of the AATA system. Some are asking the question: do we need to be spending $4 million dollars a year to get the kind of bus service we want in Ann Arbor? The need for city-wide Dial-a-Ride service is also being considered. Dial-a-Ride allows customers to call for a van to pick them up and is more expensive to operate on a per passenger basis than fixed route buses.

In implementing Dial-a-Ride on a city-wide basis, Ann Arbor has in effect become a test city for the nation. No other community has successfully developed as big and sophisticated a system as this. How beneficial this system is for what it costs remains unclear. Some argue that if the innovative system is dismantled prematurely, we may never know how successful it could be. Some say the Dial-a-Ride system was ill-conceived from the start.

In their increasingly questioning position vis-a-vis AATA operations, board members have become more interested in finding ways to evaluate the system. A five-year ongoing study of citizen views of the system to be conducted by the University's Institute of Social Research will begin shortly.

Clearly, if Ann Arbor citizens expect the AATA system to be as convenient as a second car, the system is far short of the goal. Nonetheless, for each of the past three years, AATA has carried an additional 500,000 riders. At this rate, by 1980 about 10% of rides in Ann Arbor will be in AATA vehicles. How AATA board members weigh the benefits and costs of Ann Arbor's large, expensive system will determine the future scope of AATA operations. •

Update/ Continued

Two New Downtown Parking Structures: Where Should They Go?

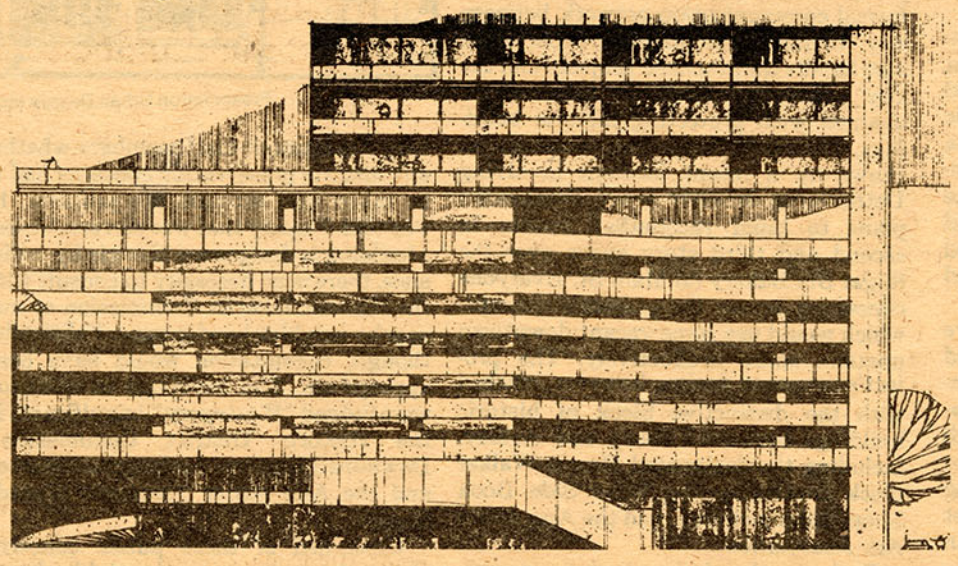
If city council finally decides to adopt the proposed downtown plan for financing the repair and building of parking structures, as seems likely, then council members will also have to address the important question of where to locate two new 500-space, multi-level structures.

We asked three downtown parking experts (Marc Reuter, a downtown planner for the city, John Robbins, head of Streets, Traffic, and Parking, and Carol Sullivan, of Ann Arbor Tomorrow) for their comments about the advantages and disadvantages of the most likely sites for such a structure. Their comments indicate that there is no clearly superior site. All centrally located areas have a clear need for more parking, so the need factor is less significant a determinant of location that it might be.

Here is how our experts analyzed the sites, each of which is city owned land:

1. *Catherine/Ashley/Ann lot.* A major consideration here is the lot's location on the periphery of the commercial district, making it less attractive to shoppers. But it is a big enough site for a 500-space structure and has good access to three streets. It would be a big boost to the Farmer's Market and Kerrytown area, an excellent location for county employee parking (less convenient for city employees), and a site on which the city and county might later decide to build a joint structure.

2. *William/First lot.* This lot is located at the foot of a steep drop-off formed by Allen's Creek, now a major city drain. The drain flows under the lot site, and a plan to enlarge it in coming years poses questions about the advisability of building a structure here. But if drain expansion seems improbably, this is a good location for long-term downtown employee parking, which theoretically could free more spaces closer to downtown for shoppers. A structure here would lend better definition to this amorphous area of town and complement the Chrysler factory across the street.



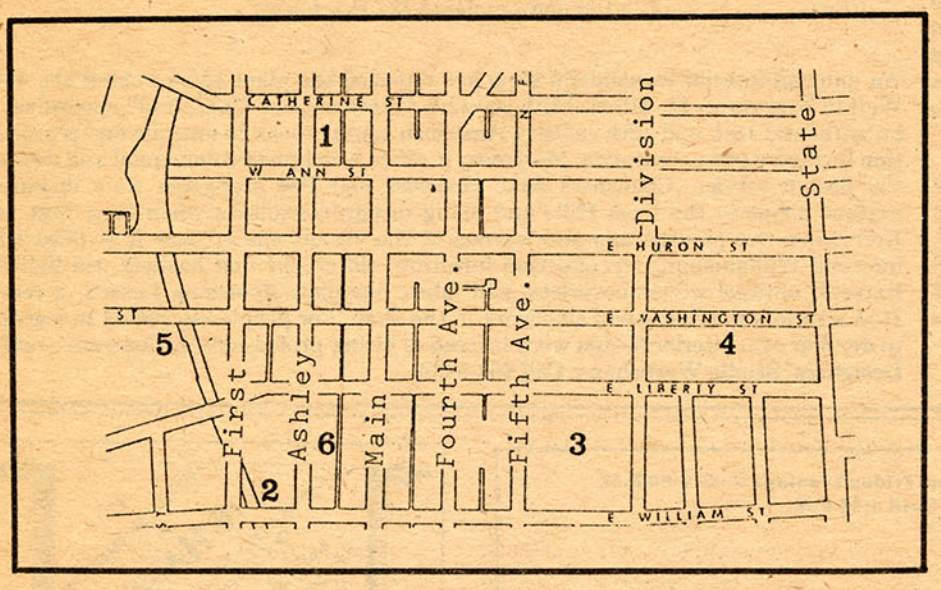
There is considerable support for building parking structures like this one. Unlike existing city structures, it includes room for offices, shops, and/or apartments. The structure in this drawing was designed by Eberle M. Smith Associates to fit on the East Washington lot (lot #4) and extend over Ann Arbor Bank to Liberty.

3. *Library lot.* This site is attractive for several reasons. It is centrally located, accessible to both State Street and Main Street shoppers. The site's area is big enough that the structure could be significantly set back from surrounding streets. It offers good auto access on both Fifth and Division. It would probably be the most likely site for the next parking structure except for one factor: the lot in question is the sole remaining large open space downtown, and many would like to see this location reserved for a development such as a convention center or high-rise apartment. If this sentiment is strong enough, the site will be rejected.

4. *East Washington lot.* There are already architectural plans drawn up for this location (see drawing), so there is no question about the feasibility of building an interesting multi-use structure here. Although mammoth Maynard carport is just a couple of blocks away, demand for parking in this area, because of the university, State Street shoppers, the churches, and the Campus Inn, is among the highest in central Ann Arbor. However, some would not like to see most of the spaces during the day used by university students, which might happen, given the university's proximity. Another drawback is that East Washington at this location could become excessively congested. Finally, this is not a location likely to please Main Street businesses.

5. *West Washington.* This city lot, now used to park city trucks, is not likely to be attractive to downtown shoppers unless a shuttle bus system is used to ferry people toward the center of downtown. But with low enough rates, it could be used for long-term employee parking. It would provide easy access to West Washington at a less congested point than closer to downtown.

6. *Kline's lot.* This lot would provide the location of a structure most beneficial to Main Street area retail businesses. It is right in their backyard. One drawback is that additional land toward William would have to be purchased in order to have room for a 500-space structure. This site would be less helpful for businesses toward State Street. •



The numbers of the map indicate six possible locations where a 500-space parking structure may be built. The numbers correspond to the numbers in the text.

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applerose
tasty tidbits
by Julian Moody

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Tasty Tidbits is Julian's biweekly newsletter about health and nutrition featuring Applerose merchandise. Get it at APPLEROSE, 300 W. LIBERTY (open 9–6).

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Update/ Continued

A Renovation Plan Again Points Up The Ambiguous Status Of Many Historic Areas

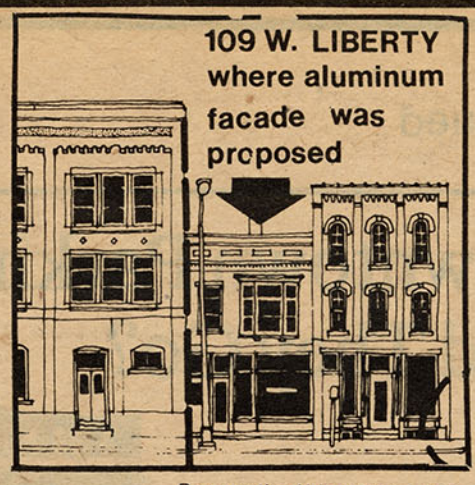
Maintaining the architectural character of old sections of town is no clear-cut matter, because many buildings and areas are popularly considered historic but not legally designated as such. In those cases, securing Planning Commission and City Council approval for site plans can be an ambiguous no-man's land for developers, filled with unexpected last-minute public outcries, hazards, and delays.

Very few Ann Arbor buildings have been legally designated and protected under the city's historic district ordinance. But public concern for undesignated structures and areas is strong enough to cause bitter disputes when plans for alterations come up before the Planning Commission and City Council. Last year's Gandy Dancer battle was a case in point.

When objections are raised as late as the Planning Commission approval stage, the property owner has already invested a lot of time and money in designing the project. So it is more difficult to persuade him to make significant changes.

The solution, of course, would be an informal communication network between city officials in the planning department who handle the proposed projects and the city Historic District Commission charged with protecting historic buildings. That isn't happening, however, as shown by a recent incident involving Detroit-area investor Peter Vestevich's plans to build racquetball courts in second and third story space over the Sugar Bin Bakery on Main St. Everyone concerned favors the project's concept, which would use some vacant downtown upstairs space productively. The project's proposed design, however, clashed with the distinctive block of historic buildings between Liberty and Ashley, including the designated Haarer-Walker block containing the West Side Book Shop, Rider's Hobby, and the Ann Arbor Art Association.

Early in the design review process, Vestevich's architects, Weinbrenner and Ebejer of Farmington Hills, asked planning department staff members whether any historic preservation concerns had to be taken into account. No problem, he was told. Legally that was correct. Unless a building is designated historic by ordinance, there is no necessity to consult with the Historic District Commission or any near by neighborhood groups. Politically, though, consultation would have been appropriate. The buildings in question were judged "B category" (significant) in the Historic District Commission's Downtown Historic Architecture Survey and the Ann Arbor Tomorrow Facade Study.



Preservation Urban Design Inc.

Unwarned of these public concerns about the property and neighborhood, the architects proceeded to design a totally new facade for the 109 W. Liberty building—a facade intentionally designed to contrast strongly with the rest of the block. The surrounding buildings were old brick ones; the Racquetball Club entrance would be contemporary, bold, and shiny, with lots of glass and brushed aluminum—hardly a happy sight to those many Ann Arborites who like the street's mellow, old-timey appearance.

When the Historic District Commission by chance learned of the planned facade, the project was up for Planning Commission approval, and the owners faced a tight schedule to open the racquetball courts in time for the 1977 fall season. How could the Historic District Commission help modify the project without derailing it, especially when it had no legal basis for intervention?

The architects did agree to change the aluminum-panel facing to dark brick, to shorten a tall window to be more in proportion with the adjacent window lines, and to infill the upper-floor windows of the Sugar Bin Bakery building with dark, not light, brick recessed from the exterior wall. The Sugar Bin building will also be chemically cleaned.

The whole racquetball club affair points up the need for better communications between the planning department staff and the Historic District Commission. And it demonstrates how vulnerable the city's historic buildings and streetscapes are when unprotected by legal guidelines for alterations. •

Short News Items

The Bible Church, now located in rented quarters at **100 N. State,** is in the process of **purchasing an existing church building in Ypsilanti.** Pastor **Levon Yuille** has launched a fund-raising campaign. He, together with his mother and brother, founded the independent, fundamentalist Pentecostal church five years ago. (See "The First Unitarian Church/The Bible Church" in Leisure). Oriented toward black people, The Bible Church now numbers over 100 members and maintains active outreach programs on area college campuses and in prisons. **Grace Bible Church** still owns the former Unitarian Church building and parsonage at State and Huron, but is trying to sell it. Asking price: $250,000.

Olga's Kitchen, the Greek self-service restaurant that succeeds Gino's at State and Washington, will open in December, when extensive remodeling is complete. Only six years ago the **historic Goodrich House** on that site was sold by the Michigan Municipal League to **Gino's Restaurants,** then rapidly expanding. Gino's swiftly demolished it. The Ann Arbor Olga's is restaurant #4 in the Southfield-based Algo Restaurants, Inc.

A rear entrance is being built at **Rider's Hobby, 115 W. Liberty,** just in time for the store's **second open house on Sunday, November 21.** Carpenter-in-charge **Jay Simrod** talked Rider's owners into getting an old wood door to complement the eighty-year-old building. Next spring they plan to replace the front sign and refurbish the facade under Historic District Commission guidelines. Last year's pre-Christmas open house brought thousands of families downtown for exhibits of model trains and planes, door prizes, and refreshments. 150 specially-purchased HO-gauge train sets sold out in half an hour. Rider's has ordered 300 of these sets this year to meet the demand.

A new fabric store called **"Impressions"** has opened at **347 Maynard** next to Regency Travel. Owner-manager **Claire Wagner,** who studies clothing and textiles in an Eastern Michigan graduate program, wanted a fabric store with distinctive natural-fiber textiles for all possible decorative and apparel uses, from skirts to pillows, rather than yard goods specifically meant for dresses, slipcovers, curtains, etc. Her stock is not chosen to follow this year's Seventh Avenue fashion trends. It includes French country prints, batiks, and ethnic-inspired textiles, including some manufactured by American Indians.

Concept IV, a group of downtown real estate developers specializing in historic properties, has recently purchased the **Darling Block at 221-227 E. Liberty** (where Goodhew's Flowers and the Fischer Pharmacy are). The new owners (real estate salesperson Bonnie DeLoof and her husband Peter, together with interior designer Estelle Schneider and her husband Herbert) plan to remodel the interior extensively. Rents will go up significantly, and some tenants (including the Free People's Clinic) will leave.

Tony and Rose Argiero's planned Italian restaurant at 300 Detroit Street and Catherine could be open by the first of the year if all goes well. Final city council approval of site plan changes will be decided in mid-November. The small, tile-roofed building, most recently the Iseona jewelry shop, was originally a Staebler Oil Co. filling station designed in a somewhat Mediterranean mode by a young woman architect just out of school in the mid-1930's. The Argieros plan to enclose the small lot with planting screens to provide a summertime patio area. Authentic Italian dishes from many regions of Italy including Rose's native Calabria, will be cooked from scratch, using home-grown fresh herbs and some homemade pastas. There will be carryouts and special requests cooked to order.

Low-interest loans for downtown facade renovations are available through the **Ann Arbor Development Council,** a non-profit companion agency of Ann Arbor Tomorrow. Loan applications are now being reviewed; **call Ann Arbor Tomorrow** at 665-0621 for information, or stop by at 207 East Washington. Loans are extended in particular to encourage restoration of building exteriors where there are historical or special architectural features to be preserved. The interest rates on approved loans would be ¼ per cent below the national prime rate, that is, currently they would be 7 per cent. All loan applicants would have to meet normal bank credit standards. The six local lending institutions have made $120,000 available for the fund.

An unusual interior furnishings shop has replaced the plant store behind the Wild Weft in **Kerrytown II,** 415 N. Fifth Avenue. **"Restorations Unlimited"** specializes in an authentic 18th and 19th century American country look in antique and reproduction furniture and accessories. Moreover, it offers a complete commercial and residential design service. Co-owners **Jane Henssler** and **Pat Mangrum** were operating antique shops in the Irish Hills and doing design consulting when they first saw Kerrytown two months ago and learned of the vacant space. Now it is filled with informal Williamsburg reproduction furniture, old crocks and baskets, tin lighting fixtures, antique woven coverlets, and fabric samples. **Roseanne Loesch,** a recent U-M interiors graduate, will also work in the shop. For people interested in learning to do their own interior design work instead of hiring professionals, there are evening **Designers' Studio Workshops.** Call 663-5232. •

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Leisure

A Tour of Historic Churches

The churches will be open most of the afternoon as indicated. Musical events will be performed one time only. They begin promptly as scheduled.

You can park centrally and walk from north [beginning with Grace Apostolic and St. Andrew's] to south, ending with refreshments at Memorial Christian Church at Hill and Tappan. Total distance is about a mile. Or you can drive and park two or three places. Free parking is available on Sunday afternoon in city, university, and bank lots.

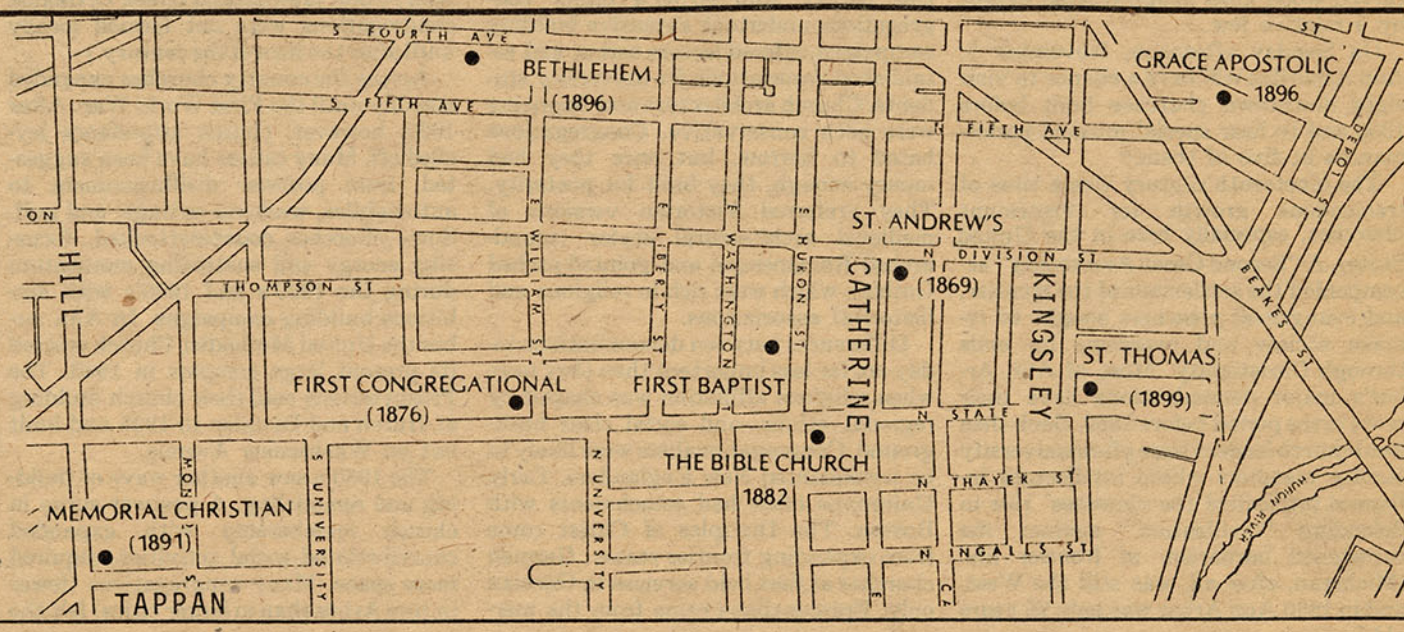
Bring along a copy of this issue of the Ann Arbor Observer as a written guide.

Casual clothes are fine.

From Gregorian chants to black Gospel music and German hymns, from Johannes Brahms to Charles Ives—the musical program for the Bicentennial Commission's tour of historic churches will be as diverse as the varieties of American religious experience.

This tour will give everyone a chance to look inside the eight central Ann Arbor churches built before 1900, to see the stained glass and interesting woodwork that enrich the interiors.

The following sketches attempt to convey some historical background on each church group, along with architectural highlights. Because of modern ecumenical developments, many churches have modified their earlier positions, so these sketches should be considered historic background only.



Schedule

Open 1:30 to 4:00

GRACE APOSTOLIC CHURCH, 632 N. Fourth Ave., near Beakes. (Completed 1896; originally Bethel A. M. E. Church)

ST. ANDREW'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH, Division at Catherine. (1869) The American Guild of Church Organists will be practicing in the church for a previously-scheduled 4:00 performance.

Open 2:00 to 5:00

ST. THOMAS CATHOLIC CHURCH, 525 N. State at Kingsley. (1899)
2:30 p.m. The Kyrie Elieson from Francois Couperin's "The Mass of the Convents," based on a Gregorian chant. Organ and men's choir.

THE BIBLE CHURCH, 100 N. State at Huron. (1882; originally the Unitarian Church)
3:00 p.m. American Gospel music sung by the choir.

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH, 502 E. Huron.
3:30 p.m. Charles Ives' "Variations on 'America' " Janice Beck, organist. A tour-de-force treatment of the patriotic anthem in styles from the solemn to the carnival.

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, 608 E. William at State. (1876)
4:00 p.m. Romantic church organ pieces by Franck and Brahms, played by Dr. Gale Kramer, church organist.

BETHLEHEM UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST, 423 S. Fourth Ave. between William and Packard. (1896)
4:45 p.m. Soloist ~~Arthur Jahnke~~ singing German hymns, including "Ein feste Burg" ("A Might Fortress"), words by Martin Luther ~~Erna Jahnke~~, organist.

Open 4:00 to 6:00

MEMORIAL CHRISTIAN CHURCH, 730 Tappan at Hill. (1891) Refreshments will be served.

Music

St. Thomas

The featured music for this tour is taken from the Mass of the Convents by Baroque composer Francois Couperin. Church organist Nancy Nowak will play the organ interlude on the church's Casavant organ, which has a rich, thick sound. The choir will sing the Kyrie (a prayer for mercy at the beginning of Mass) as a Gregorian chant incorporated into Couperin's Mass. Gregorian chant or plain song is a style of unaccompanied singing with no regular rhythm. It was used for Mass beginning in the time of St. Gregory in the sixth century.

The Bible Church

American gospel music "grew out of the struggles and joys of the black people and their relation to Christ," according to Robert Hill, choir director at The Bible Church. Songs are spontaneously selected and sung to suit the mood and tempo during the church service; they "give" with the emotions. Unlike spirituals, gospel music has a distinctive rhythm and beat. A Hammond electric organ accompanies The Bible Church choir. In recent years gospel and popular music have influenced each other greatly.

First Baptist

For the church tour, organist Janice Beck will play Charles Ives' humorous and intriguing "Variations on 'America' " ("My country 'tis of thee . . ."). Its lyrics were written by Samuel F. Smith, a Baptist minister in Newton Centre, Massachusetts.

Ives, perhaps this century's leading American composer, was a Hartford insurance executive with a passion for musical experimentation often based on American folk and popular music. Robert Noehren of Ann Arbor, well known as an organist, organ builder, and teacher, built the church's Chester Loucks Organ. He designed it to accommodate a wide variety of repetoires, as the Ives piece shows.

First Congregational

Dr. Gale Kramer, church organist, will play the pipe organ built by the Austin Company of Hartford, Connecticut in 1919. It has a full, romantic sound (or voicing) which suits the church ideology and repertoire of the late 19th century, as opposed to the crisp, neo-classical sound of contemporary organs heard at Bethlehem and St. Andrew's. These look back to Bach. Dr. Kramer will play pieces by Cesar Franck and Johannes Brahms, both of whom wrote for this kind of instrument.

Bethlehem

Two of the best-known German hymns will be sung by soloist Dorian Morris at Bethlehem United Church of Christ. "Ein feste Burg" ("A Mighty Fortress") was written by Martin Luther in 1529. It is a forceful piece with the sound of trumpets. In contrast, "Schoenste Herr Jesu" ("Fairest Lord Jesus") is a quiet 17th century hymn which uses the organ's flute and string stops. Church organist Michelle Johns will play the Casavant organ built in 1966. It has a clean sound in which individual lines show up very well. Unlike St. Thomas's earlier, more romantic Casavant, this one is suited to Baroque and contemporary music.

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Historical Perspective

Old church buildings are familiar presences on Ann Arbor's streets. To many in this transient academic community, however, church interiors are foreign territory indeed. Their stained glass windows and carved wood goes unappreciated except by a relative few.

On Sunday afternoon, November 7, Ann Arborites will have a chance to visit eight downtown churches built before 1900 and to hear special musical performances at five of them.*

The nineteenth century was a time of tremendous growth for Protestant churches, especially here in the United States. A "Second Great Awakening" accompanied the settlement of the frontier, and evangelical preachers sought to remake society and overcome its evils through Christianity. Most of Ann Arbor's major denominations have their roots in the period before 1850. Back then local church leaders were often university faculty members whose intellectual influence intensified the churches' role in defending "civilization" against the threatened barbarism of frontier life. (Michigan, after all, was still the West, and in 1850 Ann Arbor was only 26 years old.)

By the 1860's and 1870's church membership had increased greatly. Revivals brought outsiders into the churches, and social pressure reinforced spiritual impulses to keep members coming. During this period, Ann Arbor's major congregations undertook extensive building campaigns, offered lecture series, and established associations for university students. Church architecture and financing were both conservative. Congregations hated to borrow, but once they had money enough, they built for posterity. They preferred Victorian versions of medieval architectural styles (round-arched Romanesque and pointed-arched Gothic), which were rich in religious and historical associations.

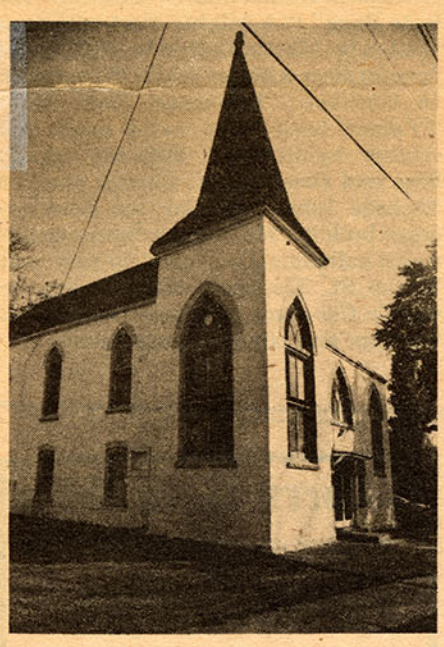
Differences between denominations today are far less important than they were when religious affiliation was shaped by regional, ethnic, and social class background. Congregationalists were likely to be transplanted New Englanders. Early Unitarians often had attachments with Boston. The Disciples of Christ came from expanding frontier states. German churches at first held services in German only. Episcopalians came from the mercantile establishment and landed gentry which remained loyal to the crown during the Revolution. The Catholic Church in the nineteenth century was primarily a church of immigrants—mostly Irish in Ann Arbor. (Jewish and Greek Orthodox congregations were not formed locally until after the turn of the century.)

Across the country churches expanded steadily until the First World War. After 1920, however, church attendance levelled off. Many causes have been suggested, from postwar disillusionment to automobiles, weekend outings, and golf. Some churches counterattacked, focussing energy and sustaining momentum during the 1920's and 1930's with ambitious building campaigns. In Ann Arbor the United Methodist Church erected its present large complex in 1940. The Presbyterians sold their church building at Huron and Division in 1935 and built out on Washtenaw Avenue.

The 1950's saw another wave of building and remodeling. A postwar surge in church membership with expanded church-related social activities, required more space. Many congregations (fewer in Ann Arbor than in larger cities) felt the central city was too congested and inconvenient for their members. The current appreciation for historic Victorian architecture had not yet developed, and some downtown church buildings were abandoned as congregations moved to the suburbs. But many congregations chose to stay downtown in the church buildings erected before the turn of the century with much pride and care. Their solid craftmanship and interesting embellishments continue to enrich the everyday lives of all who pass them.

*The Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day-Saints, at West Jefferson and Fourth Street, erected as the German Methodist Church in 1896, has been omitted. Geographically isolated from the city's other 19th century churches, it is included in the Old West Side Association's annual tour.

Bethel A.M.E./Grace Apostolic: Serving in the Black Community 85 Years



Grace Apostolic Church (1896), originally Bethel A.M.E., 632 N. Fourth Avenue.
Dave Breen

Until recent years black churches offered almost the only opportunity for black people to become leaders, so the role of the churches in the black community was especially important. The Bethel A.M.E. (African Methodist Episcopal) congregation that erected this trim brick church with the prominent steeple dates back to 1855. African Methodist Episcopal churches in general were started before the Civil War in the North by black people who withdrew from regular Methodist congregations, usually on account of segregation practiced within the congregation. They continued the Methodist emphasis on personal conversion and lay preaching, combined with an episcopal form of government by bishops and conferences.

Erecting the building at 632 N. Fourth Ave. was a struggle for the little (40 member) congregation. The cornerstone was laid in 1891, and the congregation moved into the completed basement for services. The Furnishing Club, a group of young people, worked to outfit the basement, and many members donated pews and memorial windows. After five years of work the church was dedicated in 1896. Two evangelists were invited to preach at the dedication ceremony; one was a woman, the Rev. Mrs. G. T. Thurman of Jackson. (Typically women have played much more important roles in black churches than in white ones.)

But hard times left unpaid debts, and the church had to be put up for sale about 1899. The church history depicts a doleful scene: "On the day of the sale, a few of the trustees sat in the courtroom silently praying. Just before the gavel was sounded, one of the trustees, in the person of Stephen Adams, rushed forward and forfeited his home that the church might be saved."

Bethel eventually prospered, to such an extent that it outgrew its old church building and erected a new one at 900 Plum.

The Grace Apostolic Church has owned the building since 1971. Itself a black church, it belongs to the Pentecostal Assemblies of the World of the Apostolic Faith, an interracial group of fundamentalists who look back to the day of the Pentecost (when the Holy Ghost descended on the Apostles) as the beginning of the church. They embrace the Apostles' teachings. Steeped in Biblical scripture, they, like the Baptists and Disciples of Christ, believe in the sacrament of adult baptism by immersion. The Ann Arbor Apostolic church is relatively recent, having been founded by people from Detroit.

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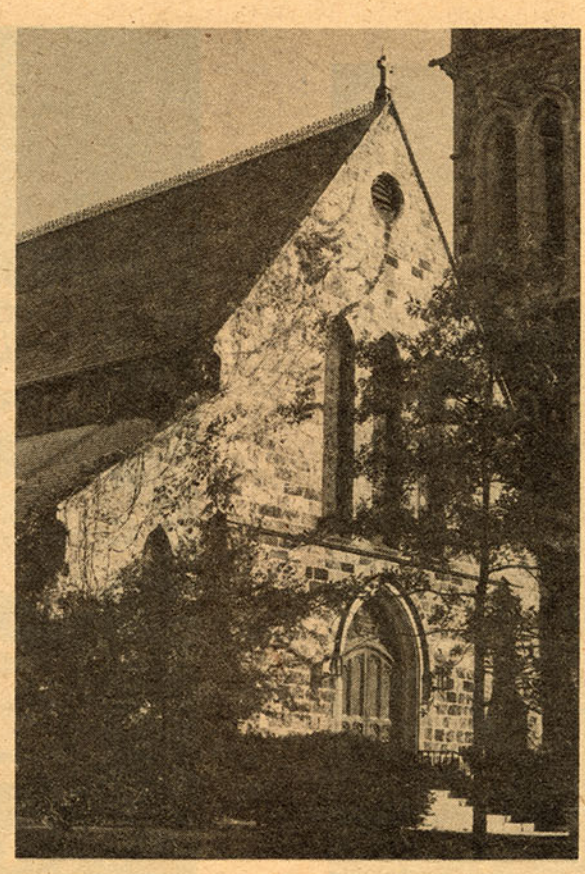
St. Andrew's Episcopal Church (1869), Division at Catherine.

Dave Breen



Dave Breen

St. Andrew's interior, a long central nave with side aisles.

Tiffany window. Dave Breen

St. Andrew's: A Trend-Setter in 1867

The history of St. Andrew's Church and other fieldstone churches in Ann Arbor goes back a long, long way—14,000 years, in fact, to the time when glaciers covered nearly all of Michigan down into Ohio and Indiana. Where the glaciers stopped for a period of time (when winter advances equalled summer retreats), they left large ridges of gravel and stones, called moraines, at their edges.

Ann Arbor, located on *two* moraines, is especially rich in beautiful fieldstones and boulders in shades of pink and gray, with flecks and stripes of other colors. Glaciers plucked and pried these stones from the Canadian Shield region north of Lakes Superior and Huron, and carried them many hundreds of miles. These stones annoyed farmers plowing their fields, but were useful as building foundations. Their decorative possibilities in local public buildings, however, went unappreciated until St. Andrew's Episcopal Church, designed by Detroit architect Gordon W. Lloyd, was completed in 1867.

Born and educated in England, Lloyd admired English Gothic parish churches and seems to have had them in mind when he planned St. Andrew's. There is little fancy ornamentation to overwhelm the visual texture of St. Andrew's stone walls or the simple shape of the sanctuary. In St. Andrew's he introduced an unusual single long clerestory window in each side of the patterned roof, with quatrefoil (literally, "four-leaved") windows to let more light into the nave.

The Gothic Revival's fashion for steep gables and pointed arches had swept America's avant-garde in the 1830's and 1840's, and it persisted for a century longer as a favorite church style. Epsicopalians in particular esteemed Gothic architecture's associations with the Middle Ages, when Christendom was still unified in one Church bound by a common tradition and liturgical rituals. American Episcopalians remained lovers of things English after the Revolutionary War, when they had to break their ties with the Church of England and the British crown.

St. Andrew's plan follows the typical Episcopal pattern of a central long nave flanked by side aisles. The choir's placement between the pews and the altar enhances the sense of ceremonious distance between the congregation and altar.

Over a hundred years of memorial gifts have increased the interior's complexity. Especially noteworthy are the walnut eagle lectern (c. 1875), the brilliantly-colored central south window by the renowned Louis Comfort Tiffany, and the main door, a meticulous copy of the original door damaged by weather.

The rear addition (originally a chapel, now offices) was added in 1880; the tower was completed in 1903. Lloyd designed both to complement his original building. A pleasant enclosed cloister to the north of the sanctuary was finished in the 1960's.

As an Episcopal church, St. Andrew's is part of the world-wide Anglican Communion to which some fifty million people belong. Anglicanism combines a liturgical tradition of set services and prayers derived from Roman Catholicism with a doctrine influenced by the Protestant Reformation, including government of individual churches by their members. King Henry VIII founded the Church of England, forerunner of all Anglican churches, when he defied the Pope for opposing his first divorce. •

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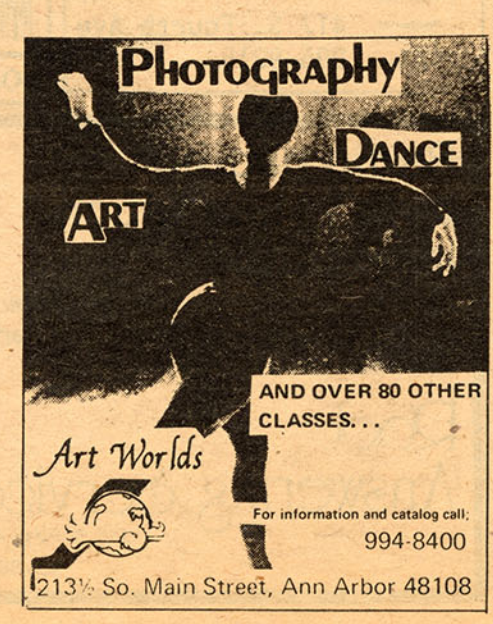

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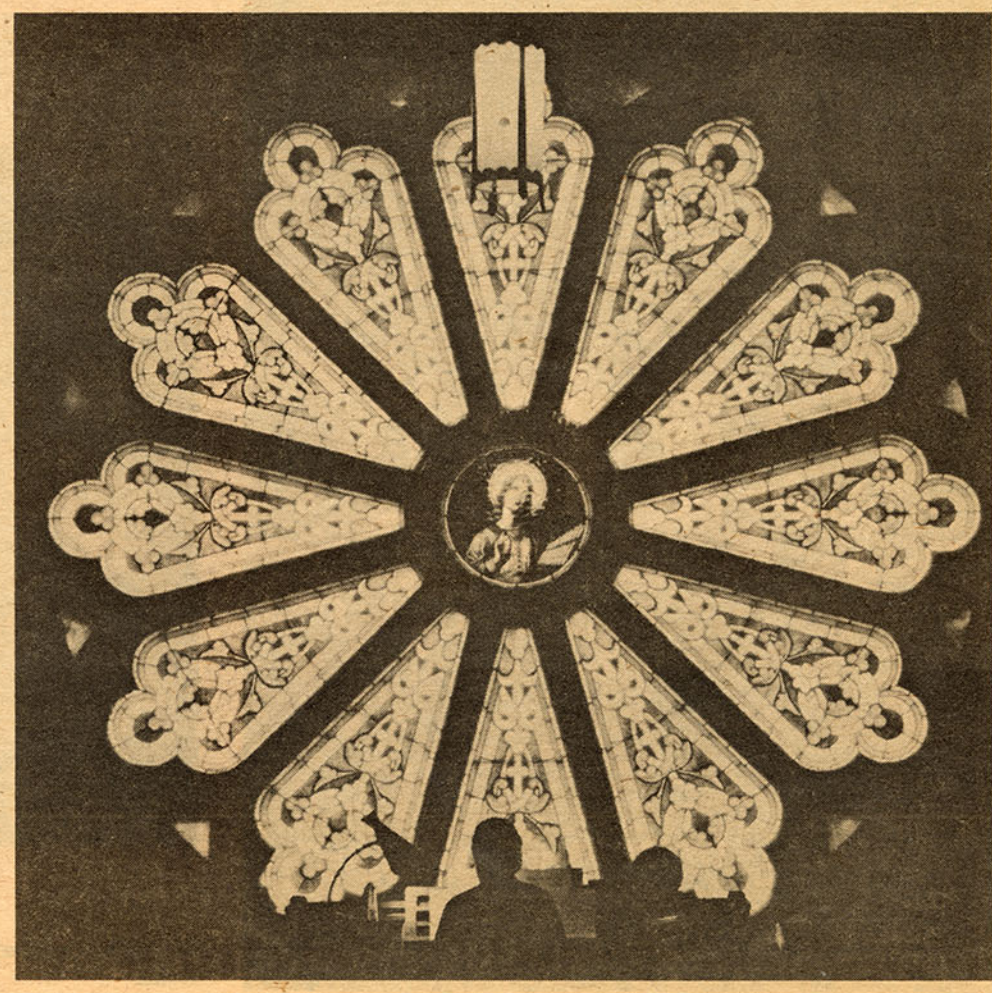
St. Thomas: Its Spires Dominate the River Valley

Dave Breen

St. Thomas Catholic Church (1899), 525 N. State at Kingsley.



The rose window behind the choir loft and organ. Dave Breen

In its early years the Catholic Church in Ann Arbor was almost entirely Irish. The Irish first came to Washtenaw County in the 1820's, buying farms in Northfield Township near Whitmore Lake. Unlike the later wave of immigrants driven out of Ireland by the potato blight of the 1840's, the early settlers had means enough to purchase property or set up in trade.

The first priests in Washtenaw County travelled to farflung homes to say Mass, but by 1835 the village of Ann Arbor had enough Catholics to be considered the heart of the Washtenaw parish. The parish grew as German Catholics and other groups joined the stream of immigration, but the need to develop a parochial school postponed the building of an impressive church to match the parish's size until after 1890.

Then funds to build a new church were sought throughout the city and state. Over 200 University of Michigan students regularly attended Mass at St. Thomas, and the *Ann Arbor Argus* reported in 1896, "It is thought that considerable help may be received from the Catholics of the state, who . . . have enough interest in their religion to wish to see a grand edifice in the Athens of the West, one which would command the respect of their children in attendance at the university."

ted the view from across the river valley. Architects Frederick Spier and William Rohns of Detroit designed the building in their favorite Romanesque Revival style. They also designed the University's Kelsey Museum, the Michigan Central Railroad Station (now the Gandy Dancer Restaurant), and most of the other stations along the Michigan Central line to Chicago.

The new church, completed in 1899 for over $75,000, proved to be a grand edifice indeed. Situated atop a steep hill descending to the river, its three towers domina-

St. Thomas's massive stone walls and turrets still seem like a fortress to passersby climbing the State Street hill from the old depot. Inside, however, the church seems light and airy, despite some heavy colors introduced in recent remodellings. The nave is 40 feet high, illuminated by three great rose windows and numerous dormers.

The adjoining brick rectory was built in 1902, and the Elizabeth Street convent was completed in 1911.

Pope John II's Second Vatican Council in 1964 called for significant changes to make Mass closer and more comprehensible to the people. Recent remodellings at St. Thomas reflect those changes. The old high altar is gone, and the new altar extends out into the seating area to be closer to everyone. The side pews now turn to face the altar. The communion rail is gone, because people no longer kneel to take communion. The Mass is now said or sung in English (the bishop's permission being necessary to sing a Latin Mass), and the entire congregation sings hymns during the service which are drawn from the entire body of Western religious music, Protestant and Catholic.

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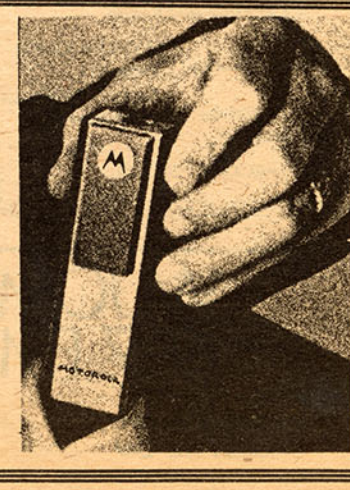

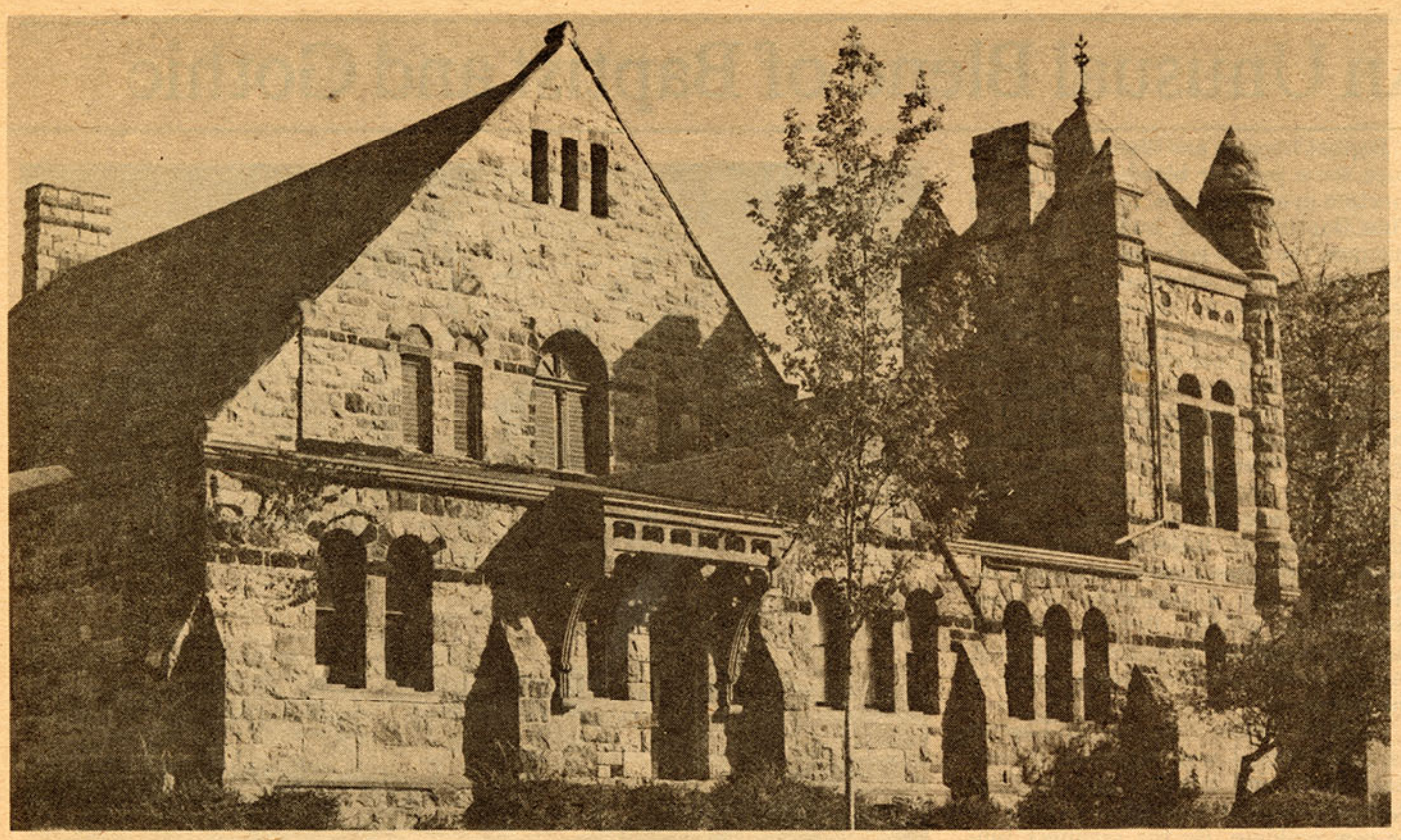

The Bible Church (1882; originally The First Unitarian Church), 100 N. State at Huron. Dave Breen

First Unitarian/The Bible Church: From Rationalism to Bible Fundamentals

One would be hard put to imagine a greater contrast in religious style than the one between the congregation that built the handsome stone church at North State and Huron and the group that uses it now. The Unitarians who dedicated it in 1882 were liberal intellectuals who regarded the Bible as simply a collection of important, sometimes inspirational cultural documents. Their ministers delighted in debating orthodox Christians over the existence of hell and eternal damnation, with the Unitarians arguing in favor of salvation for everyone. In 1946 the Unitarians moved to a suburban location at 1917 Washtenaw, and today The Bible Church uses their old church building. Its members, all of whom are black, interpret the Bible literally. Whereas Unitarians believed in using elevated reason more than any spiritual guide, The Bible Church stresses personal salvation through the profoundly emotional experience of being born again in Christ.

Unitarians were the 19th century heirs to the humanistic rationalism of the eighteenth century, espoused by Franklin, Jefferson, and many of the founding fathers. In Boston between 1790 and 1820 congregation after congregation broke away from Congregational covenants because they rejected the Trinity and believed in the unity or oneness of God. Hence, they were Unitarians, not Trinitarians. Unitarians consider Jesus strictly human, but respect him as a great teacher.

Ann Arbor Unitarians first organized in 1865. Their ministers spoke on topics more social than spiritual, with sermon topics like "The Great Labor Problem and Its Proposed Solutions." When they erected their interesting Romanesque Revival church in 1882, they chose an appropriately earth-bound style very recently made popular by H. H. Richardson in New England, here executed by Donaldson and Meier, well-known Detroit architects. Local writers considered the church artistic, picturesque, and a well-executed example of the Romanesque style.

In 1946 the Unitarians sold the stone building at State and Huron to the Grace Bible Church, a fundamentalist group that used it for 26 years until it erected a new building at 1300 S. Maple. Four years ago Grace Bible removed the pews and oak paneling to convert the worship area to a gymnasium. Some carved wood pilasters (applied columns) and the ornate pulpit and speakers' chairs remain.

About the time the new Grace Bible Church was erected, Levon Yuille, a black evangelist from Chicago, was making visits to Milan prison where his half-brother Robert Hill had been jailed as a conscientious objector. After preaching at many churches in the Ann Arbor-Ypsilanti area, Rev. Yuille, his brother, and his mother, all evangelists, established The Bible Church. First they met in a house, but then arranged to use the old stone church. In five years The Bible Church has grown from five to 100 members, with Sunday attendance of over 200, including many college students. The only black church with an on-campus evangelistic outreach program, it also maintains ministries in jails and prisons.

During the militancy of the late 1960's, Rev. Yuille says, black youth, especially college students, were turned off by religion, but today they are interested in getting back to their roots. The styles of black churches vary greatly; The Bible Church aims for a middle ground somewhere between the "quite, subtle, and sedate bourgeoisie" and the consistently "happy shouting emotion" of some Pentecostal churches. It is Pentecostal (believing in charismatic gifts such as speaking in tongues) and fundamentalist (based on a literal interpretation of the Bible as the Word of God). Aspects of humanist psychology are also used in solving problems in living. •

The old pulpit behind a basketball hoop. The Grace Bible Church, owner of the property now uses the church auditorium as a gym on weekdays.

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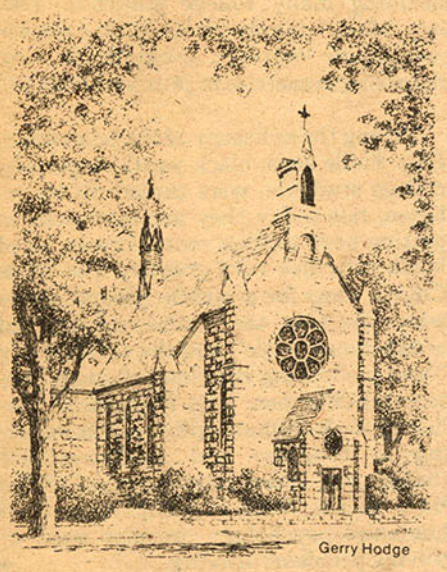
First Baptist: An Unusual Blend of Baptist and Gothic



Gerry Hodge

First Baptist Church (1880), 502 East Huron. Drawn before the original steeples were removed in 1974.

Historically Baptists have been great champions of individual freedom in religion. They have no rituals or creeds, and their pulpits have always been free, open to any invited speaker.

Freedom has meant amazing diversity among the Baptists themselves. Modern Baptist leaders have ranged in style and attitude from Harry Emerson Fosdick to Martin Luther King, from Walter Rauschenbusch (author of *The Social Gospel*) to Billy Graham.

Baptist freedom and diversity can produce some peculiar blends of form and function in architecture. In Ann Arbor's First Baptist Church, built in 1880, for instance, the style is Gothic. In the Middle Ages Gothic emphasis on vertical lines was meant to convey a spiritual quality by directing attention upward. The cruciform (cross-shaped) plan, itself a symbol of the crucifix, also functioned to distance the congregation (seated in the long arm or nave) from the altar in the short arm. With its Catholic historical associations and its spatial characteristics, Gothic was quite un-Baptist. Typical Baptist church interiors were anti-Gothic. They often resembled square auditoriums, with a semicircle of pews around the pulpit. Baptist services stressed preaching the gospel, so Baptist church layouts put the listeners close to the pulpit.

In 1879, Gothic (however un-Baptist its associations) was dignified, it was fashionable, and it was what the First Baptist Church of Ann Arbor wanted for its new building. So the architect (unknown to us) pushed and squeezed the cruciform plan to accommodate a spread-out Baptist seating arrangement.

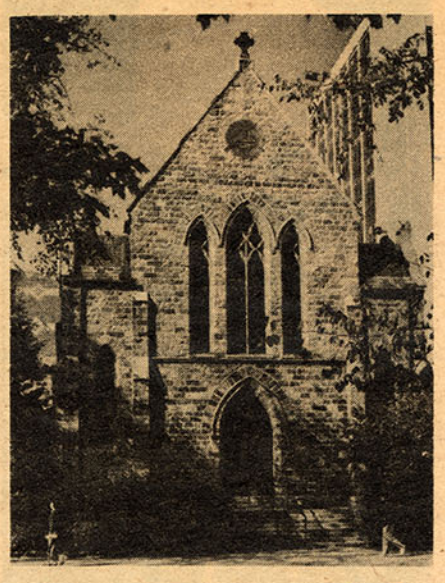
Another peculiarity of this church building is the prominent balcony sweeping down to the front altar area on each side. Though the altar and front entrance have been remodelled, other interior details, including much mellow wood, are intact. The fieldstones around the entrance are also noteworthy. They were carefully selected for color and interest, and were symmetrically matched.

View from the balcony. Dave Breen

First Congregational: A Distinguished History on Campus

Although the Congregationalists were a well-established denomination in New England long before Ann Arbor was founded and settled (principally by New Englanders) in 1824, it would be over two decades before the first Congregational church was formed in the city. Congregationalists had agreed with the Presbyterians, who held similar beliefs, that Congregationalists would expand within the confines of the East, while the Presbyterians would look westward for growth.

So Ann Arbor's First Congregational Church was formed not by a pioneer missionary effort but by a disagreement. In 1847 some members of the Presbyterian church, offended by the pro-slavery views of their minister, broke away to form their own Congregational church. Membership grew steadily over the years, and by the 1870's, the Congregationalists were in need of a much larger church. Impressed with the church architect Gordon Lloyd had designed for the Episcopalians a few years before (St. Andrews) they commissioned him to make similar use of the native glacial boulders for their own building.

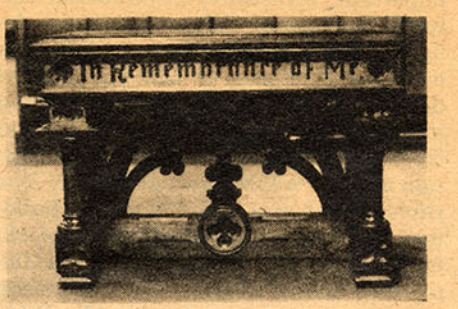


Dave Breen

The First Congregational Church (1876), 608 E. William at State.

The campus location on State Street made the First Congregational Church especially attractive to students. A series of ministers were outstanding preachers who drew such big crowds that long second-story galleries had to be built for the overflow. The most popular preacher of all was Lloyd C. Douglas, minister from 1916-1921. His dramatic oratory, full of powerful imagery, witty phrases, and humorous anecdotes, filled the house. In 1921 an Akron, Ohio, congregation wooded him from Ann Arbor, but he used material gathered during his stay here to write *The Magnificent Obsession,* a best-selling inspirational novel based on the anonymous good deads of a University surgeon. It launched Douglas on a literary career that included *The Robe* and *The Shoes of the Fisherman,* historical novels about early Christians. Stained glass windows in the adjacent Douglas Memorial Chapel on William (1951) commemorate Lloyd Douglas and his works.

When student church attendance fell off in the 1920's, as it did generally, the old sanctuary with its empty galleries seemed gloomy. A total interior remodeling in 1940 removed the galleries and replaced the pews and glass windows, leaving only the carved roof trusses, supporting columns, and interior staircase from the 1876 interior.



Dave Breen

The original communion table.

New stained glass windows, patterned along English Gothic lines and rich in Christian symbolism, replaced the earlier gray glass windows. The large window over the entrance commemorates James Burell Angell, a church member and for 38 years the president of the University of Michigan. These elaborate windows contrast greatly with the austere simplicity of old New England Congregational meeting houses but attest to the more recent influences of English Congregationalism. The windows of Pilgrim Hall (1951) depict figures from the church's New England heritage.

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Bethlehem: Michigan's Oldest German Church

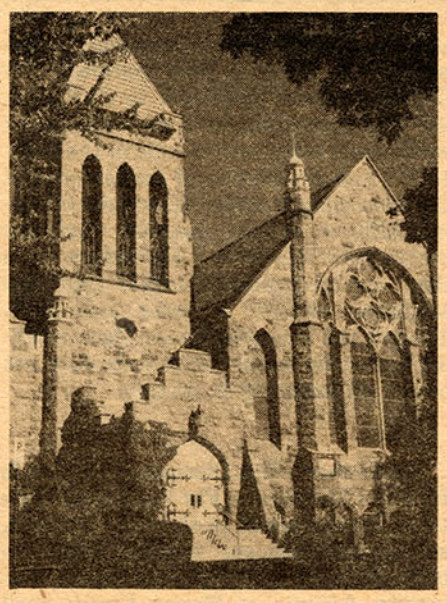
For many immigrants who came here, their native culture was precious and vulnerable. Without deliberate protection, it could quickly disappear as the first American-born generation assimilated themselves into American society.

As with black churches, the immigrants' churches were the institutions that fostered group cohesiveness. Often churches sought, through educational programs, to keep the cultural heritage alive in succeeding generations.

Ann Arbor's Bethlehem Church was founded by South German immigrants from Swabia, in the kingdom of Wurttemburg, in 1833. It maintained a tradition of German-language services until 1964, a rather remarkable achievement in cultural continuity. (Alternative English-language services began in 1906.) When these Swabians settled in Ann Arbor and western Washtenaw county beginning in 1830, the Ann Arbor Presbyterians invited them to their church services. "But the Word of God in English," a later historian wrote, "did not speak to their hearts or satisfy their deepest religious longings." So they requested a minister from the Basel Mission Society in Switzerland, a seminary sharing their evangelical point of view. (Evangelical religion stressed piety and a personal relationship to God through the Gospel. It tended to minimize denominational and credal differences, both of which meant more to strictly orthodox Lutheran Germans.)

The Basel seminary sent young Friedrich Schmid to the Washtenaw Swabians. Pastor Schmid, though somewhat disappointed at first not to be sent to Africa, tirelessly ministered to all Michigan's early German settlers until other German missionaries arrived. He walked monthly to Detroit (a 16-hour trip) and occasionally to German communities in Monroe and Saginaw.

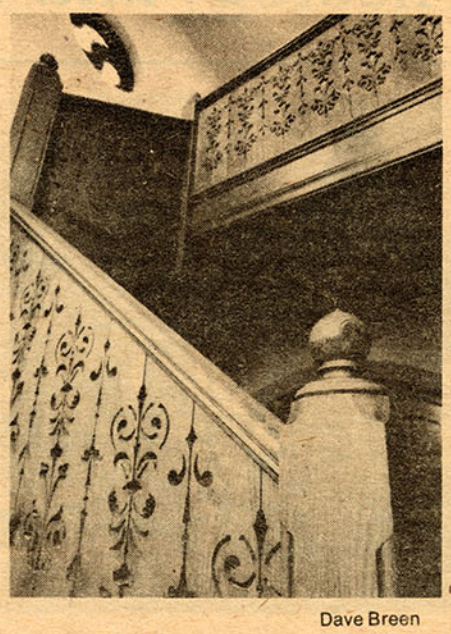
Under Pastor Schmid, the little church here grew and prospered. It moved from a log cabin west of town (in the oldest, eastern part of what now is Bethlehem Cemetery) to Ann Arbor in 1839, and later established a German school.



Ann Arbor Bank

Bethlehem United Church of Christ (1896). Note the large decorative Gothic door hinges.

When Pastor Schmid retired in 1871, the congregation was ready to erect a larger, more expensive structure. Building lots were purchased, and pledges were made, but when quarterly payments fell due in 1872 and 1873, little money was actually collected, for reasons not now clear. It was then resolved to expel from the congregation all who did not pay their pledges. To protest this drastic measure, nearly half the congregation, including former Pastor Schmid himself, left the church and founded Zion Lutheran Church.



Dave Breen

Balcony staircase with sawn decoration.

Social and cultural differences lay behind the congregational split to an extent. Bethlehem members kept stronger ties to their South German homeland and preserved their evangelical pietism; Zion members tended to assimilate earlier into the mainstream Protestant and American society.

The split postponed Bethlehem's building plans until 1892; the present church was completed in 1896. Designed by Detroit architect Raseman, its style was then considered "Gothic with just enough variation to suit the modern eye." Though the details are based on Gothic, the feeling, inside and out, is different. Three great, wide window areas fill the square sanctuary with mellow light. The lower window panels illustrate Bible passages, inscribed in German beneath each window. With lots of warm-toned wood (including a Christ figure carved by Alois Lang, a noted woodcarver from Oberammergau, Germany), the church is at once spacious and friendly.

Dave Breen

Jesus knocks on a door representing the individual soul. "See, I stand before the door and knock."

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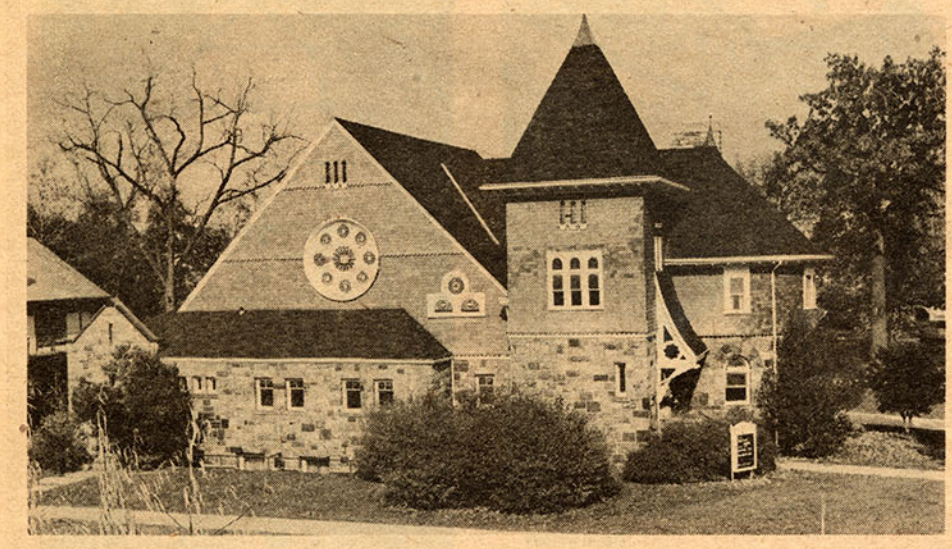


Dave Breen

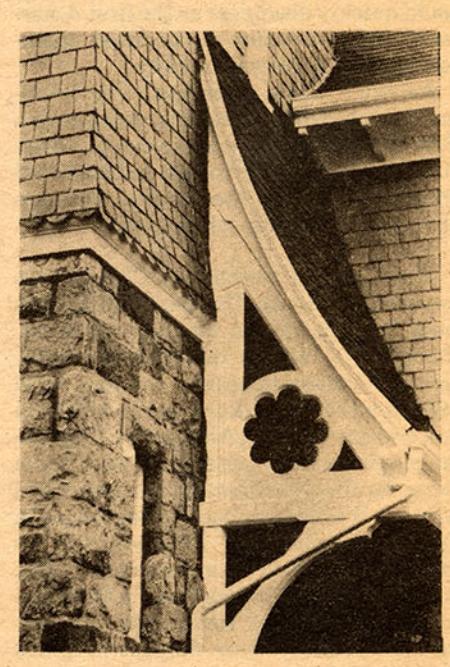
Memorial Christian Church (1891), 730 Tappan at Hill.

In 1891 Ann Arbor's new Disciples of Christ congregation erected its first church building, choosing an innovative "modern" design quite unlike the Gothic or Romanesque Revival favored by most churches. Today that style is known as the Shingle Style, a distinctively American mode which combined native stone and shingles with a potpourri of architectural details ranging from New England Colonial to Victorian Romanesque Revival. Though the Shingle Style's turrets, rounded bay, and irregular roof lines are picturesque, they are treated with a boldness and simplicity that keep them from being fussy.

The Disciples' handsome little church, which uses red slate instead of wood shingle siding, has an informal, unimposing air about it that parallels the Disciples' direct approach to Christianity. That group, begun in the wake of the widespread religious revivals in the early 1800's and prominent in settlements of the advancing frontier, minimized historical differences and stressed Christian unity. New Testament Christians were their spiritual models, rather than the Medieval church or later reformers. Though the Disciples based their teachings carefully on the Bible, they were not bound to interpret it literally.

Ann Arbor's first Disciples were people from the Middle and Far West who came to study and teach at the University. A substantial bequest enabled them to build the church. It stood on South University Avenue at Haven Street until 1923, when work began on the Law Quadrangle. The building was dismantled, each stone carefully marked so that it could be reassembled at its present location. In 1950 organ pipes were concealed, beams and pews painted. Otherwise the interior is largely unchanged.

The arrangement of pews reflects the Disciples' emphasis on lay participation in the service. The pews surround the projecting front chancel area in a wide sweep to achieve a sense of intimacy and group unity. The beautiful stained glass windows have strictly decorative designs, because the Disciples avoided religious symbolism. •



Dave Breen

Detail showing characteristic Shingle Style stones and shingles, with wood.

Leisure Notes

Radio station **WUOM's 29-hour fundraising Marathon '76** starts Saturday evening, **November 13** at 6 o'clock and ends Sunday night at 11. The goal is $30,000 to fund coverage of special concerts and news events, to support the free listeners' Program Guide, and to buy new records and tapes. All the regular WUOM announcers will host the marathon, which features special guests and live performances including the U-M Jazz Band and the Gilbert and Sullivan Society. Some donors will win special premiums: records, books, gourmet dinners, and flying lessons. Dial 763-5100 to contribute.

King Arthur's "**Camelot**" comes alive this month in a joint **UAC Musket/MM Productions** presentation of the Lerner and Lowe favorite. Original choreography and a 27-piece orchestra should make this a lush visual and musical production. The show runs at the Lydia Mendelssohn Theater in the Michigan League on two weekends, **November 4-7** and **November 10-13**, with evening performances at 8:00 and a 2:00 matinee Sunday, November 7. Tickets ($3-$4) can be purchased at Hill Auditorium ticket central, Jacobson's, and the Liberty Music Shop.

Dave Lau will present a **slide and tape synchronization** featuring **theater and church organs** in England, Wales, and France for the Motor City Theater Organ Society's Second Sunday open house in November. Time: 10 a.m. Sunday, November 14. Place: the Michigan Theater. Free admission.

A "pops concert" by **Hector Olivera** on the **Michigan Theater's Barton Organ** is coming up November 18 at 8 p.m. If you haven't heard a big theater organ with all sorts of amazing orchestral and stage sound effects, this should be a treat. The program will include show tunes, light classics, nostalgia from the 1920's and 1930's, and organ accompaniment to a showing of "The Blacksmith" with Buster Keaton. Tickets are $3.00 ($2.00 for students) in advance at the theater, $3.50 at the door.

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Local History

The Wild Men's Shop: Continuing a Centuries-Old Family Tradition

By WYSTAN STEVENS

"I'm the end of the line," says George Wild, Jr. matter-of-factly, as he reviews highlights in the history of one of Ann Arbor's oldest family businesses.

The Wild Men's Shop clothing firm began in 1888 as a tiny upstairs tailor shop on East Washington Street. The original brass-and copper business sign of nimble needler G. H. Wild now decorates the back wall of the store at 311 S. State, where his grandson and several employees outfit customers today.

George Jr. observes that he is actually a fourth-generation member of the firm, since founder G. H. briefly employed his own father as assistant. That was about the time G. H. moved from his "downtown" location near Main Street to a new building 'way over on South State close to the campus. He was the first to locate a clothing store on State, and other clothiers hooted at Wild's reckless breaching of tradition.

But State Street, close to campus, had a captive population of college students, and in 1904 the student body was a fashion-conscious crowd. College men chose natty fabrics from the bolts of cloth on Wild's sample tables. G. H.'s business serged.

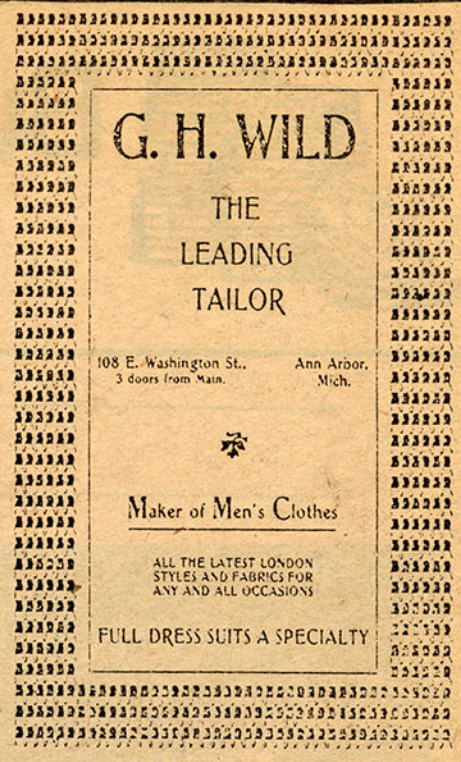
Students became alumni, but still sought out Wild's stitching skills. George Wild, who joined his father as cutter in 1919, for years made weekly trips to an office in Detroit, where magnates of the metropolis were measured for new duds. "We did all the big shots in Detroit," George Jr. says with pride. The elder George introduced "item" business (ties, collars, socks) which presaged the retailing of ready-made clothing—today the firm's only stock in trade. The tailoring end of the business was dropped in 1962, ten years before George Senior died.

The family name is German, and so was G. H. Wild. Born in 1856, a native of Leinfelden, near Stuttgart, he shared the general Swabian resentment of Prussian military conscription, imposed on the German principalities after unification in 1873. The Wilds had lived in Leinfelden for centuries (a tailor by that name appears in local records as far back as 1490), but when G. H. turned 17, he forsook the village of his ancestors and sailed for America.

Forming a partnership with a master tailor in Toledo, G. H. moved to Ann Arbor after the shop went up in flames. Fires have also plagued the State Street firm. One in 1936 took off the roof, after staring in a doctor's office upstairs. A conflagration in 1947 gutted Wild's entire building including the half rented to a restaurant. That fire also destroyed an ornate cash register that had come from the defunct Huston Brothers pool hall, a pre-prohibition student hangout. Unaltered despite its new locale, the gleaming machine had continued to ring up "pints," "quarts," and "cigars" when drier goods were being sold. A third fire in 1956 removed the building's rebuilt front.

The firm's punning logo also stirred some heat a few years ago. "Be a Wild Man," suggested the slogan over a caricatured black man wearing a top hat and leopard skin. In an age less sensitized to racial insults, white students had been hired to wear blackface for Wild's in the annual Michigras parade. But times had changed. A protest was lodged. Overnight, the Wild Man on the show window at the front of the store turned maize-and-blue. Unnoticed, his black predecessor still decorates the awning of the store.

About ten years ago, George Jr. hired someone to make a papier-mache model of of the leaping logo for a counter-top display. Six months later the model was delivered—but it was six and one half feet high! Dismayed, Wild banished it to basement storage. There it was destroyed one night by a valiant janitor who, mistaking the menacing shadow for a prowler in the dark, swung at it lustily with his broom. Thus was the Wild Man tamed. •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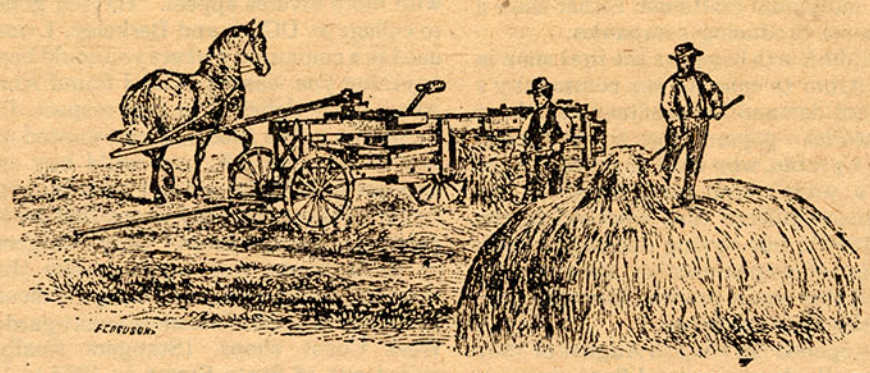
Mr. Wetherbee's Reminiscences

Helping Dad with His Drayman's Work Drawing Stones and Cutting Hay

By HERBERT T. WETHERBEE

In this month's episode from the boyhood of the late Herbert T. Wetherbee, his father, a journeyman carpenter, finally acquires a team of horses and a wagon to set himself up as a drayman to do hauling and odd jobs. He also fulfills his dream of owning a fine horse. It was 1897, and construction of the new St. Thomas church had just begun, so the Wetherbee team helped draw stones from fields to use in facing the church. [*See the articles on St. Andrew's and St. Thomas churches in this month's Leisure section.*]

Dad took care of horses and cows owned by Wirt Cornwell just above us on the hill. Dad finally got ahold of two horses, a buggy, and a barn to put them in. We were finally in business. Dad did team work, such as hauling ashes and whatever had to be hauled. The barn was about a block from our rooms (in a second floor apartment on Thirteenth Street, later known as Glen), so it was necessary to take care of the horses three times a day.

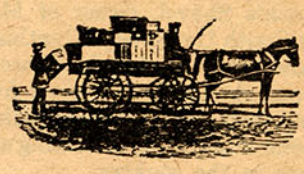


Dad used to cut hay from Dr. Sedgwick's field (presumably down the hill on Thirteenth Street where Glen now crosses the river), and I used to help him. [At this time Mr. Wetherbee was ten or eleven.] He would pitch a forkful up to the hayrack, and I would straignten it out on the wagon.

One day on our way home we met Stevey Gieskle, a horse trader, with a long string of horses for trade. Dad had a horse that Stevey liked so they traded right there in the middle of the road. Dad traded old Nell, who had the heaves, for a horse named Bill, somewhat of a pacer, so Stevey said.

Dad finally had a horse of quality, a pacer! You could count all the ribs in his body. He may have been a pacer, but I can't remember ever seeing him even in a trot. We now had three horses, a buggy horse and a working team.

During the hard times, in the winter when teaming was not to be had, Mother got a job in the Covert Laundry to help out. Dad used to go up after her with our buggy horse when her work was done. Often it would be late, and Frank and I would crawl under the kitchen table and wait for them to come home. We were just little kids and scared of the dark, having been forbidden to light the lamps. Frank had measles and I had whooping cough that winter.



On Saturdays, and days on which there was no school, I would go with Dad to draw stones from the farms where they were cutting them for facing, in the building of the new St. Thomas Church. It was built on the commons where we school kids used to play. Our school (St. Thomas) was built in 1884, and the nuns lived in an addition to the school. I used to carry split wood from the basement up to the kitchen for the sisters to cook with. Then they started to build the church hall next door. When it was finished, the church was moved from the old wooden building on Kingsley Street, and this hall served as our church until the new one was built on the common. They moved the old wooden church over on Dan Ross's lot on Division Street and he used it for a shop. (House moving was quite common then.) •

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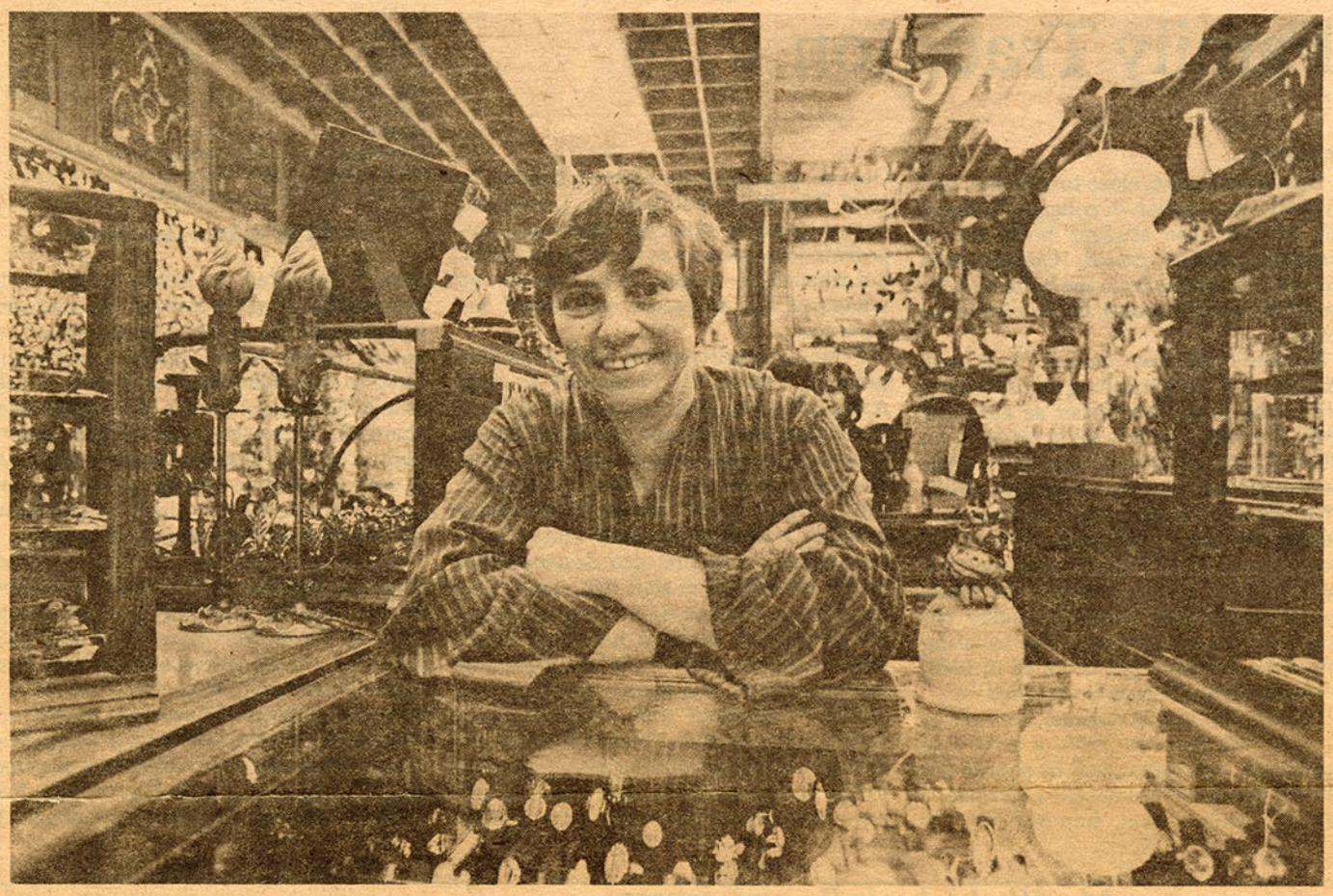
Business

Ann Arbor's First Head Shop Now Has a Broader Appeal



Dave Breen

Cynthia Shevel Talks about Middle Earth

We spent a recent afternoon talking with Cynthia Shevel, owner of Middle Earth on South University. Cynthia has had Middle Earth now for nine years, and in that span she has seen it grow from a small head shop into what many believe is visually one of the most interesting stores of its type in the country.

Middle Earth is a store you wouldn't have seen back ten or so years ago in Ann Arbor. It's a product of the late 1960's, a time when popular tastes blossomed along much broader and more differentiated lines. A greater general appreciation for the hand-crafted, for unique designes, for exotic and camp styles has resulted. Although Middle Earth carries such things as jewelry, greeting cards, candles, and pottery, it is more limited in what it offers than a traditional gift shop. The emphasis is not on prestigious brands, but rather diverse styles of items produced in small quantities. Much of what Cynthia buys for her shop comes from individual craftsmen rather than a few mass-producing companies.

Middle Earth began as the first shop in Ann Arbor to cater to the community's growing demand for marijuana-smoking accessories—papers, pipes, screens, roach clips. Cynthia, who went to college in the 1950's, wasn't (and isn't) a part of the marijuana culture that emerged in the late 1960's, but having decided to open one kind of shop or another, she shrewdly sensed this was a product line with possibilities in Ann Arbor.

She opened her shop in August of 1967 in a small, obscure second-floor space on Liberty Street. "I didn't know a hash pipe from a grass pipe from a roach clip when I started. I was a different generation. But I started out with what I thought would sell—pipes, papers, and related paraphenalia—and indeed they did sell," she said.

But even while opening Ann Arbor's first head shop, her sights were on a shop with more diverse appeal. "Having gone to college at UCLA and Berkeley, I was used to a community where you could buy anything you wanted. And I found Ann Arbor fairly deficient in that respect. In California in the 1960's, if you wanted to buy an unusual gift, you could buy an unusual gift. There weren't then in Ann Arbor all these specialty shops that have grown up in recent years." Only Stangers on State Street was anything like the shop she envisioned, and Stangers chose primarily to imitate the more avant-garde West Coast shops. (Stangers finally pulled out of State Street in 1974.)

Cynthia by contrast has followed a much more individualistic buying philosophy: she has chosen a few item categories (e.g. handcrafted jewelry, pottery, greeting cards) and then carefully sought out a broad variety of styles—from the subdued to the exotic—within these select domains.

Starting a store was the last thing Cynthia had in mind when she came to Ann Arbor in 1965 to obtain a Ph.D. in social psychology and social work. She had earned her masters in social work at Berkeley and was employed for two years at a mental health center in Connecticut before coming here. When she got to Ann Arbor and while studying for her doctorate, personal tragedy caused a major shift in her choice of career. "Part of what caused me to go into business was a personal crisis. A very close friend had died of cancer, and I was in a field where I just didn't want any more of that intense involvement. I just felt drained. I needed something that would occupy me, that would not tax my emotions for awhile, and I found that business was something I could immerse myself in and work long hours in, and it was the perfect thing for me—very therapeutic."

Cynthia's choice of running a small retail shop as an alternative to social work was a little like going back home, but with an ironic twist. "I had been raised in a family where we had always been in retail businesses. My parents ran a grocery store. And it was the one thing I vowed I would *never* do. I *hated* it because it kept the family apart. They worked all the time, and it was something I didn't want to have to do.

"And yet I found that I took to it when I went into business myself. It all came very naturally to me. I'm not a well organized person, so the bookwork is something I have never had any inclination to do or any feel for. What I had a feeling for was merchandising. I have a good eye for what type of things will sell—an ability to buy."

One of Cynthia's chief tenets of buying things for her store is: people want as wide a selection of styles to choose from as possible. Therefore if she decides to carry something, she's going to have a lot of it to choose from. "I'll tell you, in general, my philosophy of buying is, if I decide to carry wallets, I will not carry one or two kinds of wallets. I will have several dozen types. Always a variety."

Finding a wide range of styles of the items she carries keeps her busy. "I buy from hundreds of different people. I may buy one thing from somebody. Five things from somebody else." She keeps on a one-to-one basis with her suppliers. "I usually see suppliers at least once a year. With outstate potters, it usually involves my going to see them, and it's usually at an annual craft fair somewhere. If I like somebody's work, I just leave it to them. I tell them to send me whatever it is they're doing. I have had less problems with individual craftsmen than with large companies that import. Typically with individual producers of good-quality

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Business / Continued

work, what I first see is what I keep getting. With large companies, what I first see is often *not* what I end up getting. Sometimes it's something of far lesser quality. The involvement of the individual hasn't been there. Some of the companies are terrible about this. They'll decide to send you something else and think you'll forget exactly what you ordered and accept it. I don't. I made that decision when I started: if it wasn't what I wanted, it was going back."

When Cynthia sees something she wants for her shop, she usually doesn't give up until she has found the supplier. This sometimes isn't as easy as it might seem. In some cases she has had to hunt for over a year before she locates the craftsman or manufacturer. Once she saw a greeting card of a cat reading the Illiad in a shop in Woodstock, N.Y. She immediately saw this was a line of cards which would appeal to her customers, but "Made in U.S.A." was all that was printed on the back of the card. "It was put out by a place called Darwin House. But nobody I talked to had ever heard of Darwin House. Nobody. But about six or eight months after I found that card, after asking every card salesman I ran across with no results, I was at a show in the East where I found a greeting card magazine which had their address. I immediately wrote them and eventually got back my letter stamped "No Forwarding Address." So I searched another four months, and on a fluke I went to a greeting card show in New York, and there they were: a display of cards put out by Darwin House." Cynthia's persistence paid off. Her Darwin House cards are favorites in her shop.

There is, of course, more to running a shop than buying the merchandise with which to fill it. Another big factor is selecting the right people to work with you. "Personnel selection is crucial—it's extremely crucial," says Cynthia. "I've been fortunate in having really good people working for me—really imaginative people. They have been able to get involved in the store. However successful I've been, a lot of the credit goes to the people over the years who have worked here. Most of them have turned out to have really good ideas." It is not easy to spot such people to work for you, as any local merchant can testify, and Cynthia seems to have a special knack.

She looks for people with an artistic eye. Also people with enthusiasm, people she calls "alive" and "involved." But she finds that underlying motivation is a basic factor which determines who has been a valuable employee in her shop. In her experience, her most motivated employees have worked out of economic necessity. "There are people in this community who come to you for work who don't need work. Their parents are supporting them. They don't need a job. They think it's a lark to work. They want to "try that out." In general, I have found they do not work out. I like to hire people who really need the money—to go to school, or whatever. But they need it. They tend to be more serious and the job means more. Because work is not play. Anybody who takes the job with the attitude, 'I thought this might be a fun place to work,' I tell people who say that, 'This *isn't* a fun place to work.' It *can* be. I mean, there are some enjoyable aspects. But it's *work*. There are times when it's boring, and there are times when, you know, when you have to do unpleasant things. So I like to hire people who need the job."

"Most of the people who have worked out are out of college, but at an interim state in their lives where they're not ready to commit themselves to a career," Cynthia said. But they've got to be stable workers even if their lives are in transition. "They've got to be able to separate their personal from their business life. Part of it is age, actually. A person 25 or 30 has resolved something in the normal process of development that an 18-year-old hasn't. Because I can tell you, if you run a store and a person has had a fight with her boyfriend the night before and the next day is totally wiped out, you're in trouble."

Besides Middle Earth, which remains her main interest, Cynthia has originated and still owns a couple of shops on State Street: The Bead Bag and Get Frocked. A fruther project is germinating in Cynthia's mind, but it's not of an entrepreneurial sort. "What I'd really like to do next is to write a mystery. I love mysteries. And that's one of the things I'd like to try and do." She has already developed a format for a series of mystery stories. "My heroine is based on a social work supervisor I had when I was a student. She's going to be a detective on the side. You have all these murders that occur at various agencies. I've got a family service setting, a public welfare setting, a psychiatric clinic, and a social work school setting."

If she decides to write mysteries, it will be a full-time project, she thinks. So if a few years, we may find that Cynthia Shevel has given up the shops she has spent over nine hardworking years to develop, and assume the role of mystery writer. Her shops are an asset to central Ann Arbor, and her talents would be missed. •

Test Of the Town

By BOB BRECK

Do you merely look at the Ann Arbor scene, or do you really *see* the city's many interesting and beautiful buildings and places? *Test of the Town* might help to develop your ability to look closely at the sights of central Ann Arbor . . . *and* win a prize if you're quick enough with the right answer.

Where was this photo made? Let us know the specific location via postcard or letter to *Ann Arbor Observer*, 502 East Huron, Ann Arbor 48104. Senders of the first two correct answers received will get their pick of any one of the thousands of records available at the Liberty Music Shop, 417 East Liberty.

So start looking for the object in this issue's photo—which is not far from a popular eating place.

Last month's *Test of the Town* was the white iron fence at 314 E. William, across from the Public Library. Kay Knight and joint entrants Marita di Lorenzi and Jack Thomas won albums of their choice from the Liberty Music Shop. •

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Detroit Street

Food & Drink

Indian Food Fit for a King

Proprietress Loveleen Bajwa in her new Indian restaurant, the Raja Rani

By SARAH O'CONNOR

The small cement-block building at East Huron and Forest by the bend has accommodated a succession of enterprises in recent years, from a bicycle shop to a barbecue restaurant. Its newest occupant is the Raja Rani, an Indian restaurant, and judging from the lines outside on weekends, it may be around for a long time.

Loveleen Bajwa, a native of India, started and operates the Raja Rani, which means "king and queen." She talked to us about Indian food in general, and what it takes to prepare authentic Indian restaurant fare in the Raja Rani.

A meal for the average Indian in northern India consists of whole wheat chapati bread and dal, a mashed lentil spread. In southern India rice and dal is a typical meal. Most Indians only eat meat on special occasions like weddings, births, or holidays because the Hindu and Buddhist religions encourage vegetarianism, and meat prices are high.

The food served in good Indian restaurants is richer and more complex than home cooking. More nuts, creams, and spices are used. Indian cooking requires skill, long practice, and perseverance to master, Mrs. Bajwa told us. Like most crafts, it is passed from one person to another and can't be learned just by picking up a cookbook. The real masters, found in the kitchens of the wealthy, are often unwilling to share their secrets. When Loveleen is in India, she visits restaurant kitchens and talks to the chefs to learn more.

Indian cooks start with ingredients familiar to American cooks: cauliflower, zucchini, eggplant, and peas; meat, primarily lamb and chicken; creams, cheeses, nuts, dried beans, and fresh herbs and spices.

"It's the spices and the way we cook the food that makes it different," Mrs. Bajwa explained. That's where the craft of cooking comes in. At the Raja Rani herbs and spices are ground daily. Some, such as mint and coriander, were grown in summer just outside the restaurant. Fresh herbs and spices make chutneys (various vegetable appetizer dips) and curries. The yellow curry color comes from a combination of paprika, turmeric, and saffron, to which other spices may be added. The Raja Rani's cooks make their own yogurt and fresh cheese, called paneer.

Loveleen Bajwa came to Ann Arbor from Punjab, a northern Indian state, twelve years ago when her husband went to graduate school. She studied home economics at Eastern Michigan, feeling that she would then learn more quickly about American culture. Having earned a B.S., she is now working on a master's degree in food and nutrition.

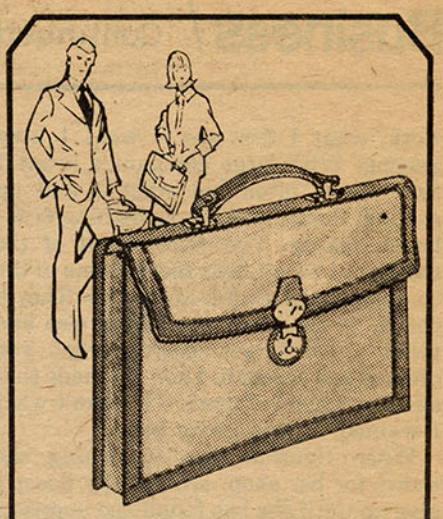
Two years ago she opened Sangam, a small Indian food and gift shop at 107 S. Fourth Avenue. Last year she opened a carry-out Indian food shop at the Old World Village Mall. The response to these ventures was so positive that she was able to get investors together to back the Raja Rani restaurant which opened on Easter Sunday, 1976. Though other restaurants have failed at that location in recent years, the Raja Rani appears to be an established success. Lines often form on weekends, when out-of-towners come to eat. Weekdays, though busy, are not so crowded. (Hours are 5:30 to 9:30, closed on Mondays.)

Authentic Indian food in an authentic Indian atmosphere is Loveleen Bajwa's goal. No American food is on the menu. Indian music plays in the background. Waitresses dress in saris. The serene decor creates the atmosphere of a good restaurant in India, with tasteful china and linen. On the walls hang prints illustrating scenes from the life of Buddha. Pierced brass lamps cast moving fragments of light on the walls and ceiling.

Indian food takes a long time to cook. Although the restaurant is only open four hours, the staff puts in a full eight-hour day to prepare the food.

Indian meals are also meant to take a long time to eat. A meal at the Raja Rani begins with papadam (crisp fried wafers) and a green chutney sauce. Other appetizers include samosa filling (pastries stuffed with mildly-seasoned meat and vegetables) and pakora (vegetables fried in batter). Twenty-four meat, chicken, seafood, or vegetarian entrees are available a la carte from $2.50 to $6.00, spiced to order: mild, medium, hot, or Indian hot. Watch out for innocent-looking little green peppers—they're *very* hot.

A la carte selection can be confusing, but there are also dinner specials for two. One features tandoori (broiled) chicken in yogurt, spiced meatballs, and vegetable curry, with chapati bread and appetizers, all for $12.00. A vegetarian special for two costs $9.50. •



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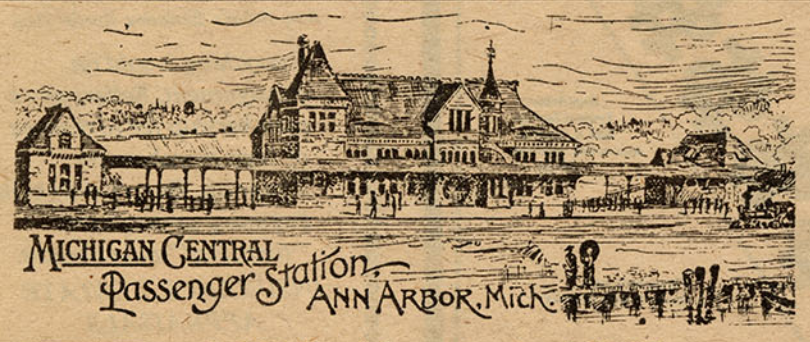

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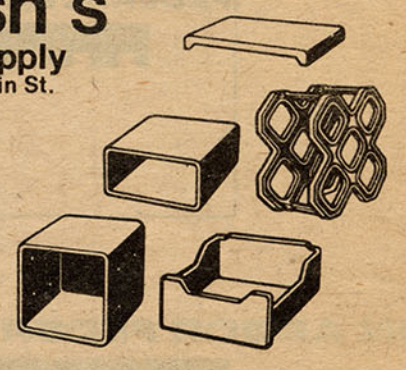

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